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The Nation.

November 2, 1985 $1.25; U.K. 65p

EDITORIAL

REAGAN AND THE WORLD

Fresh Start was supposed to be the conceptual theme of President Reagan's campaign in 1980, but when someone heard that a laundry detergent with the same name was about to come on the market, the slogan was quickly changed to A New Beginning. Now the ideological account execs in the White House have recycled the old soap as the theme of Reagan's foreign policy initiative in this summit season.

Beneath the cold war boilerplate and treacly pieties of Reagan's speech to the U.N. General Assembly was a determination to maintain the international status quo, which in his view allows the United States to seek strategic superiority in the arms race and to export counterrevolution in Central America. Reagan acknowledged the Soviet offer to reduce nuclear missiles (how could he have ignored it?) and countered it with his own proposal to continue developing *and testing* Star Wars exotica. Of course, everyone wants a world without weapons. But if that's not possible, at least just yet, Reagan would rather work toward giving the United States primacy rather than begin the more difficult process of arms reduction.

The same trick of offering the impossible as a means of continuing the actual appeared in Reagan's "bold" new proposal for settling regional disputes. The President would have Eastern-aligned governments negotiate with their insurgent opponents, while Western allies could stonewall with impunity.

The world was waiting for a sign that Reagan is serious about peace and freedom. He might have given it with a unilateral offer: to scale down even one category of America's weaponry, or reduce aid to one group of America's terrorists in the Third World. What the United Nations got was no fresh start at all; just the same bad business as usual.

HIJACKING HYPOCRISY
Alexander Cockburn

REGISTRATION STRATEGY
Richard A. Cloward
Frances Fox Piven

RAMBO PLAYS THE CAPITOL
Frank Donner

THIRD PARTY FOR BLACKS?
Ron Walters

ANTINUCLEAR MUSIC
Evan Eisenberg

DEMOCRATS AND THE LEFT

CAN WE PUT NEW LIFE IN THE PARTY?

BLAIR CLARK

Is there any hope for the Democratic Party?

And if the world's oldest continuing political party should recover from its self-maiming, would it make any difference? Would the quality of public life, the moral fiber of the nation, the happiness of its citizens, the chance for peace and prosperity, improve if once again Democrats could call themselves members of the majority party, the "party of the people"?

Consider the bright and the dark spots in prospect for the next political cycle, the off-year elections of 1986 and the general election of 1988.

First, put on rose-colored glasses and look at the few bright ones:

§ Reagan, after all, will be finished in 1988, no longer able to weave his peculiar spells over the voters.

§ Any President's party almost always loses seats in Congress in off-year elections. And of the thirty-four Senate seats on the line in 1986, twenty-two are Republican ones (Reagan's 1980 coattails effect). Winning back the Senate and increasing their control of the House is not, for the Democrats, just whistling "Dixie."

§ Democratic chances in the state gubernatorial and legislative contests do not now look bad. Even in the strongly Republican West, voters tend to balance their votes for G.O.P. Congressional and Presidential candidates with majorities for local Democrats.

§ The Democrats have managed to keep control of Congress, or at least one chamber of it, for all but one Congress since the eighty-second, in Eisenhower's first term. This may have checked the slide toward purely reactionary government,

(*Continued on Page 442*)

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LETTERS.

'THE PAPER TRAIL'

San Francisco

An item in the August 31 "Dispatches" titled "Claire Sterling & the C.I.A." contains some clear falsehoods about the charges made by Sterling against Henri Curiel, whom Kai Bird and Max Holland describe as "a radical French intellectual."

I am the author of an article dealing with the Curiel case (see "Betrayal," *Commentary*, October 1985). Sterling's charges against Curiel—that he was an unshakable defender of the Soviet Union and a "godfather" for the international armed left—were *not* made on the basis of a "sole piece of documentary evidence . . . a public report released by the C.I.A. in 1979," as Bird and Holland claim. To the contrary, Sterling commented on the Curiel case following publication of the charges against him in leading European journals, including *The Times* of London and one of the largest French newsmagazines, published before the C.I.A. document was released.

Bird and Holland seek maliciously to portray Sterling as a virtual fabricator of the Curiel charges, when the paper trail on Curiel is extensive. There have been articles by Jean-François Revel and others besides myself; there is an extensive book on the case in French; there are government and other documents. All describe Curiel in the terms used by Sterling. I believe you owe her an apology and a retraction.

Stephen Schwartz
Editor, Journal of Contemporary Studies

BIRD AND HOLLAND REPLY

Washington

In the chapter on Henri Curiel in *The Terror Network*, Claire Sterling cites fourteen separate sources a total of forty-six times. Discounting those citations marginally related to Curiel, the discerning reader finds that Sterling's entire tale hangs on a few slender threads. The source cited most often (eight times) is an article from *Le Point* by Georges Suffert, but Sterling does little more than recycle the allegations first carried by that French weekly. And what was Suffert's source? Chiefly the French counterespionage agency known as the Direction of Security and Territory (D.S.T.). By now it ought to be an acknowledged rule of thumb that when intelligence agencies leak secrets, it's out of sheer frustration at their inability to produce any evidence that will stand up in court.

Sterling's idea of corroborating Suffert was to lift (eight times) from items in *The Economist*'s newsletter "Foreign Report" (the second-most-frequent citation). An informed reader will recognize that Robert Moss, another well-known conspiratorialist, is the author of those items. Suffert, Moss and Sterling probably share the same "confidential" right-wing informants. Is it a surprise that these shrouded sources confirm the story they leaked in the first place, no matter how many times they are asked?

In eight instances, Sterling cites single articles from three more reputable British publications, *The Times*, *Daily Telegraph* and *The Sunday Times*. We think it significant that nowhere in the *Sunday Times* article can the initials "K.G.B." be found, which is odd considering the core of Sterling's argument is that Curiel worked for the K.G.B. And contrary to Schwartz's misleading claim, *The Times* merely reports that some in the French press accused Curiel of being a Soviet agent; it lends no credence to that charge. Similarly, the *Daily Telegraph* regurgitates the *Le Point* article in its obituary on Curiel but adds nothing.

That's why we wrote that the sole *documentary* source is the C.I.A. report, which Sterling cites ostentatiously. A quotation from the C.I.A. begins the chapter, even though the agency conspicuously fails to back up Sterling's claim about Curiel's link to the K.G.B. Even so, Sterling embraced the C.I.A. characterization, while making a pitiful attempt to discover the agency's source. Is it the D.S.T.?

That Henri Curiel aided Third World revolutionaries is not in doubt. He admitted as much. But no one has demonstrated, in any convincing manner, that he took his orders from the K.G.B. Sterling is a fashioner of conspiracies who weaves her tales out of the loosest circumstantial evidence. Rumor, innuendo, selective quotation and unverifiable "confidential sources" are the stock tools of her trade. *Kai Bird and Max Holland*

'BIZARRE' JOURNALISM

Santa Fe, N.M.

"Bizarre" is indeed the way to describe Shirley Christian's brand of "journalism" [Alexander Cockburn, "Beat the Devil," Aug. 31]. Long before arriving at *The New York Times* as its Central America correspondent, Christian showed a proclivity for assertions that are just plain weird. Take, for example, this gem which appeared in the October 24, 1983, issue of *The New Republic*: "[There is] an ongoing debate in Nicaragua over whether the Sandinistas really defeated the National Guard or just conned the Western world with their democratic façade."

What? You go through revolution and bloodshed when all you have to do is con the Western world with a democratic façade? Now, there's a lesson all you would-be revolutionaries can learn from!

Of course, none of those thousands of folks calling themselves Sandinistas really died; that was all just part of the elaborate con job staged to distract the Western world while a bunch of their comrades sneaked in the back way and "stole the revolution." Goodness, that sounds like something those crafty Vietnamese would think up, like the time they invaded their own country!

I told Christian I had been in Nicaragua for many months between 1979 and 1981 and had never been aware of such a debate there. She insisted that I was mistaken and that the F.S.L.N. had "come to power in Nicaragua by making itself the beneficiary of a remarkable confluence of events beyond its direct control." Well, yes, like the confluence of Somoza with torture, the National Guard with wholesale slaughter, that sort of thing. But, gee, maybe all that was an indirect part of the con job, too. Gives you something to think about, huh?

Joseph K. Skinner

FALKLANDS, U.S.A.

St. Petersburg, Fla.

Stephen F. Cohen's perceptive evaluation of the Gorbachev administration carries some interesting, and perhaps alarming, implications ["Sovieticus," Sept. 14].

He notes that Gorbachev's plan to "cut drastically the vast middle-level bureaucracy of ministerial agencies as 'superfluous links'" has "aroused strong bureaucratic opposition," and that "in response, Gorbachev's supporters have stepped up their attacks on 'the ministerial apparatus.'" This suggests that Gorbachev is attempting to inaugurate a revisionist socialism in which the welfare of a large and unwilling segment of the citizenry will be sacrificed for an anticipated increase in productivity and that, whether or not the revisionist attempt is successful and regardless of its outcome in terms of productivity, the creation of a new class of dissidents is inevitable.

Many observers, reasoning that any embarrassment for the Soviet Union is good news for the West, will be cheered by the prospect of Secretary Gorbachev busily painting himself into this corner. Sober reflection should temper such exuberance because, very likely, the Secretary's and the Politburo's reaction to any substantial escalation of domestic discord will resemble Margaret Thatcher's in similar circumstances. And although Gorbachev has no Falklands, he does have us. *Ben Tutoli*

NOT FOR A THIRD PARTY

Berkeley, Calif.

A citation in the article "The Politics of Transcendence" [Harvey Wasserman, Aug. 31] misrepresented my book, *Green Politics: The Global Promise*, and the excerpt from it published in *The Nation*'s April 21, 1984, issue. In the book I argue for building a Green political *movement* in this country, rather than a third party.

Charlene Spretnak

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Manuscripts: All work submitted will be read by the editors. The magazine cannot, however, be responsible for the return of unsolicited manuscripts unless they are accompanied by self-addressed stamped envelopes.

Publisher, Hamilton Fish 3rd

Associate Publisher, David Parker; *Advertising Director,* Chris Calhoun; *Business Manager,* Ann B. Epstein; *Bookkeeper,* Ivor A. Richardson; *Art/Production Manager,* Jane Sharples; *Circulation Manager,* Stephen W. Soule; *Subscription Manager,* Cookee V. Klein; *Assistant Advertising Manager,* Neil Black; *Receptionist,* Greta Loell; *Mail Clerk,* John Holtz; *Administrative Secretary,* Shirley Sulat; *Production,* Terry Miller; *Typography,* David Acker, Christopher Bille, Randall Cherry; *Nation Associates,* Nancy Bacher; *Nation News Service,* Jeff Sorensen.

The Nation (ISSN 0027-8378) is published weekly (except for the first week in January, and biweekly in July and August) by Nation Enterprises and © 1985 in the U.S.A. by the Nation Associates, Inc., 72 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10011. (212) 242-8400. *Washington Office*: Suite 308, 110 Maryland Avenue N.E., Washington DC 20002 (202) 546-2239. Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y., and at additional mailing offices. International Telex: 667 155 NATION.

Subscription orders, changes of address and all subscription inquiries: *The Nation*, Box 1953, Marion, OH 43305. *Subscription Price*: One year, $45; two years, $81. Add $7 per year for postage in Canada, Mexico; $13 per year for other foreign. Claims for missed issues must be made within 60 days (120 days foreign) of publications date. **Please allow 6-8 weeks for receipt of your first issue and for all subscription transactions.** Back issues $3 prepaid ($4 foreign) from: *The Nation*, 72 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10011. *The Nation* is available on microfilm from: University Microfilms, 300 North Zeeb Rd., Ann Arbor, MI 48106.

EDITORIALS.

Love That Bomb!

A funny thing happened to Proposition 6 on its way to the ballot box in New York City last week. The voter-initiated referendum was supposed to give New Yorkers the chance to express their opinion on the Navy's plan to berth a fleet of nuclear-armed ships, led by the battleship Iowa, off Staten Island. Six days before the November 5 balloting, a local Superior Court judge threw out the proposition, agreeing with opponents (including the Koch administration's lawyers) that the popular will could not interfere with the city's power to give territory to the Navy. Besides, the judge averred, citizens had no electoral discretion over national security matters. In other words, Judge to N.Y.: Drop Dead.

The coalition of progressive organizers and peace activists that had mounted the campaign against "home porting" the seven-ship fleet in New York Harbor began scurrying through the judicial system hoping to reinstate the referendum on appeal, and it was possible that the legal dispute would not be resolved until the last minute before the polls opened. But the campaign was certain to outlast the courts' whims last week, because the issue profoundly influences the political culture of the city, and it has significance for national politics as well.

There's no supportable strategic reason to harbor the ships in New York, except perhaps to draw enemy fire from sites inhabited by populations more solidly in the military establishment's bag. Navy Secretary John F. Lehman Jr.

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says he'd like to create new targets in places like New York and San Francisco to confuse the Russians, who presumably would have a hard time finding the Iowa in the understory of the urban jungle. But what's clear from the history of the home-porting project is that the Reagan Administration is seeking to establish a political base behind the lines of the liberal opposition. Tom DeLuca, who is coordinating the Campaign for a Nuclear-Free New York, calls the process deliberalization and argues that the Iowa and its Tomahawk cruise missiles are in a sense aimed at native New Yorkers rather than at enemy aliens.

Home porting in hitherto nuclear-free cities has won the support of many local officials, who hope the infusion of money, manpower and military hardware will increase their own political power and influence. Mayor Dianne Feinstein was so enthusiastic about the plan to make San Francisco a home port that she vetoed a Board of Supervisors resolution opposing it. Mayor Ed Koch lobbied to get the ships, then tried to block the referendum and campaigned actively against passage, calling supporters idiots, in one of those felicitous epithets that characterize his public discourse.

Expansion of the nuclear fleet into the new waters will cost upward of $1 billion, and not much of the money will fall into deserving hands ($85 million has been authorized so far). Nonmilitary urban development would do infinitely more good, but the Reagan regime prefers to dole out its aid in lethal packages. Members of Congress savor Federal pork from whatever barrel it flows, and the Navy has been doing its own targeting of Congressional districts represented by members of various military appropriations committees. In the South and the Sun Belt, representatives of both parties have for years constructed unbreachable defenses of army bases, weapons plants and missile sites in their districts, and there they sit in lifetime tenure. New York's Congressional delegation is probably the most liberal bloc in the nation, but a few hundred million dollars in the right hands can work wonders in changing political sympathies, if that is the strategic objective.

Senator J. James Exon, the Nebraska Democrat who has fought a lonely (and losing) battle against Lehman's scheme, said last spring that the debate over home porting "is really more concerned with politics than naval warfighting capability." Shortly after the defeat of Exon's amendment to kill the battleship refitting program, Lehman began doling out naval goodies to:

§ Corpus Christi, Texas, at the behest of Representative Solomon Ortiz of the House Armed Services Committee and Senator Phil Gramm of the Senate Armed Services Committee;

§ Mobile, Alabama, hometown of Senator Jeremiah Denton of the Armed Services Committee;

§ Pascagoula and Gulfport, Mississippi, home ports for House Republican whip Trent Lott, Senator John Stennis of the Armed Services Committee, and Senator Thad Cochran of a defense appropriations subcommittee;

§ Pensacola, Florida, serviced by Representative Earl Hutto of the Armed Services Committee, and Senator Lawton Chiles of an appropriations subcommittee.

And the list, as they say, is still in formation.

The battle for Proposition 6 is being fought in large measure on the expedient but ambiguous platform of nuclear fears. Those opposed to the nuclear ships are playing to understandable anxieties about a nuclear accident and the threat of annihilation in attack, and Mayor Koch seeks to calm his constituents with assurances that the risk of nuclear explosions is "infinitesimal." But if the Navy has its way—and it's not easy to stop the Pentagon with ballots—a more present danger will be the nuclear habituation of the populace. New Yorkers may never learn to love the bomb, but they could learn to live with it, and thus the masters of militarism could break the local spirit of opposition without firing a single shot.

Economic Tremors

The Reagan recovery goes whistling along with hardly a pit stop for fine tuning, and the President's men keep promising the United States a decade of boom at the least. But they ignore some increasingly ominous danger signs. The consumers who have led the current upturn with purchases great and small are in debt up to their nostrils, and sinking still. Personal saving is at its lowest point since statistics on it were kept, and personal debt is commensurately high. Even as mortgage rates decline, housing starts are plummeting, which means that potential buyers are already mortgaged to the hilt. Then along comes the news that the rate of wage increases projected for 1986 will decline again; for the fifth year in a row, workers' raises will shrink, and the American dream of ever-bigger paychecks will be deferred once more.

All of a sudden, mainstream economists confirm the predictions made by their leftist colleagues a few years back, that the shape of poverty is changing under Reagan's rule. It has acquired a supply-side tilt: the supplier side is getting richer and the consumer side is not. Particularly hard hit are youngsters who will find no jobs in the factories, which have closed for good or gone abroad, and are ill prepared to compete for what few high-paying positions have been created in their place in high-tech industry and the service sector.

In 1983, according to data reported recently in *The New York Times,* 22.2 percent of the nation's children lived in poverty, and that rate has been climbing since the mid-1960s. Although some poor families manage to break through the arbitrary poverty line every year, there are more than enough new poor to take their places. And the median income for all families, adjusted for inflation, is now lower than it was in 1973.

The two-tiered society which is the consequence of Reaganomics, acting to exaggerate the inequities of America's "mature" industrial system, is sure to cause profound political and social disruptions long after Reagan is back at the ranch. Cities full of frustrated young people cannot be calmed by the orderly operation of the free market—Reagan's W.P.A. That nonprogram promises only more

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dead-end shifts in fast-food outlets and limo rentals. Either a welfare system far more generous than anything yet tried in developed societies will have to be designed, or government, at whatever level, will have to intervene to establish new economic priorities. Or both. Hard times are already nipping at the heels of the good ones, and bigger bites are on the way.

Aid Commandos

"My Spanish isn't super but neither was my Vietnamese when I got there," said a member of the Air Commando Association (A.C.A.) when asked to join its task force to Guatemala. This 1,600-member group, which started as a fraternal association of retired Special Operations military personnel, now spearheads the U.S. medical relief effort in the war-torn Guatemalan highlands. The A.C.A. is part of a U.S.-backed rightist network of private groups providing aid throughout Central America. What is noteworthy about the commandos and another group active in Guatemala, the National Defense Council (N.D.C.), is their close relationship with the army, which for years has been accused of committing human rights abuses of genocidal proportions. A British parliamentary delegation concluded last year that the "Guatemalan military has created a nation of orphans and widows."

The military's abysmal human rights record doesn't bother the A.C.A.'s new president. "We are very, very pleased with what the Guatemalan Army is doing," he told freelance journalist Stewart Lawrence in February. Association members meet regularly with Gen. Oscar Mejía Victores and his staff, who arrange for storage and transportation of supplies and give the commandos room and board during their frequent visits.

Since March the A.C.A. and the N.D.C., both nonprofit organizations, have delivered more than $10 million worth of medical supplies for Guatemala's controversial "poles of development" program. Under that program the government has relocated thousands of Indian peasants, displaced by the army's counterinsurgency campaigns, in rebuilt towns strictly controlled by the military. The two groups work with a mixed bag of far-right organizations: the World Anti-Communist League, *Soldier of Fortune*, the evangelical Christian Broadcasting Network's Operation Blessing and the elitist international Catholic order, the Knights of Malta.

The impetus for the A.C.A.'s aid program came from Brig. Gen. Harry (Hienie) Aderholt, retired, who took over the leadership of the group last year. Aderholt's experience with relief efforts in war zones goes back to the 1960s and early 1970s, when he served as chief of covert air operations in Southeast Asia under Gen. John Singlaub (now head of the World Anti-Communist League). With a senior C.I.A. official, he distributed $100 million in medical supplies to Hmong tribesmen fighting in the C.I.A.'s "secret war" in Laos, according to the Cleveland *Plain Dealer*.

As in Laos, Aderholt obtains the bulk of his medical supplies through World Medical Relief, a multimillion-dollar charity founded thirty-two years ago by Irene Auberlin. Earlier this year, Auberlin pledged $20 million in donated supplies to the A.C.A.'s relief work in El Salvador, which she calls "a beautiful, beautiful program." The Reagan Administration showed its pleasure with World Medical Relief by giving Auberlin the prestigious President's Volunteer Action Award last year and by sending two White House aides to tour the organization's warehouse in Detroit. The 88-year-old Auberlin was recently declared an honorary commando by the A.C.A.

The association's other major supporter is Andy Messing, head of the National Defense Council. Messing, a rising star in the New Right, lobbies for low-intensity warfare in both the Pentagon and the White House. "Low-intensity warfare" typically refers to the techniques used by unconventional forces fighting guerrilla-style wars. These include operating in small units, psychological warfare, sabotage, espionage and civic action, of which the council's efforts in Guatemala are a prime example. Messing has described Central America as an "accessible laboratory" for the study of low-intensity warfare. A consummate politician, he has recruited two senators and eight representatives for his group's advisory board.

The N.D.C.'s relief efforts in Guatemala were first proposed to General Mejía Victores in March of last year by Gabriel Gomez del Rio, a council member and a former official of the Agency for International Development. A photograph in a Guatemala City daily shows Gomez del Rio with an A.C.A. member; the caption proclaims that the N.D.C.'s shipment—$2 million in medicines—is offered to "victims of communism."

Although the Administration has not publicly commented on the A.C.A.'s and the N.D.C.'s work in Guatemala, the two groups have relied on the Michigan Air Guard to pack up supplies, the U.S. Air Force for storage facilities, and active-duty Special Operations Air Force personnel to help transport several tons of medical supplies to Guatemala. The U.S. Embassy in Guatemala provides the A.C.A with a postal box and, in the words of one A.C.A. member, "watches over" the group. Aderholt has boasted to fellow members of his contacts with "high-ranking people in Defense, the White House and Congress." This should not be surprising; recent reports in the press indicate that the Reagan Administration secretly planned to replace C.I.A. funds for Nicaraguan rebels with aid from private U.S. groups and individuals.

What are a bunch of old warhorses doing in the business of humanitarian relief, or, as one A.C.A. member calls it, "counterinsurgency medical civic action"? "We're helping the refugees to help them stay on our side," Aderholt explained to one reporter. "Anyone reading anything sinister into this has got to be a radical son-of-a-bitch."

SUSANNA MCKEAN MOORE

Susanna McKean Moore is an associate of the Human Rights Project at the Center for Investigative Reporting.

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BEAT THE DEVIL.

News by Spasm

The hijacking of the Achille Lauro and murder of Leon Klinghoffer touched off the fiercest spasm of international hypocrisy since the downing of K.A.L. 007. The only hint of a silver lining was the gratifying sight of the repugnant Bettino Craxi being sufficiently discomfited by highhanded U.S. actions to resign, thus causing a momentary hiccup in the career of the leader of what U.S. newspapers have been chastely calling one of the most "stable" (i.e., cravenly pro-American) governments in postwar Italian history. *New York Times* correspondent E.J. Dionne Jr. took great pains to stress that the average Italian was cheering lustily for Reagan and his war on terror, notwithstanding the anti-American fulminations of such regularly conservative papers as *Corriere della Sera*. Correspondents for *The Boston Globe* and the *Los Angeles Times* painted a rather bleaker picture of Italian fury. The most intriguing revelation was Foreign Minister Giulio Andreotti's disclosure, hastily denied by Craxi's office, that the Egyptian airliner was actually on a course bound for Italy when the U.S. hijacking occurred.

The hypocrisy was evident a hundred times a day in the saturation coverage. The usually rabid Harvard Law Professor Alan Dershowitz, for example, made so bold as to claim in a *New York Times* Op-Ed article on October 17 that if an Israeli's extradition from the United States was sought on grounds of terrorist activity, the United States would speedily honor the demand. We must thus imagine that if Tunisia sought to extradite Shimon Peres as the terrorist mastermind of the Israeli bombing that killed seventy-two people, the Israeli prime minister would soon be on his way to a Tunisian courtroom under a Delta Force escort.

One can readily understand the delight of the Israeli government and its U.S. supporters at the consequences of the Achille Lauro hijacking, probably "masterminded" (a curious word to use about an affair so brutally injurious to the Palestinian cause) by Mohammed Abbas. Harder to understand, if only marginally, is the untrammeled enthusiasm with which, over the past days, the U.S. press has accepted the notions that this same Palestinian cause is without merit because of what four men did on the ship and that Klinghoffer, awful though his end may have been, was the only known victim of terrorism in the fall of 1985.

To appreciate this obsession one need only study the press coverage of the murder of Alex Odeh, Los Angeles regional director of the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee, which hardly got above police-blotter status and which certainly did not excite the personal regrets and condolences of President Reagan. Indeed, an early story reporting Odeh's death on the Associated Press national news wire of October 12 rather revealingly misprinted the name of his organization as the "Anti-American Anti-Discrimination Committee." James Abourezk, chair of the A.D.C., says his organization will sue ABC, on whose Los Angeles local station Odeh appeared the night before he was killed by a bomb which went off as he opened the door to his office. During the interview Odeh apparently had expatiated at some length on his regrets at Klinghoffer's death and had expressed condemnation of such acts, but this aspect of his sentiments about the hijacking was entirely omitted from the material appearing on screen. The suit will presumably revolve around charges that the TV station endangered Odeh's life by misrepresenting the tenor of his remarks.

Wickered Out

Hypocrisy and misrepresentation on a similarly bloated scale marked Tom Wicker's column in the October 21 *New York Times*, apropos the Nicaraguan emergency decree. My respect for Wicker took a severe plunge some time ago, after he started parroting the Reagan Administration's views about the late great Grenadian Maurice Bishop. But this time, Tom, it's all over between us.

His column was a classic of the liberal-rat-down-gangplank genre. Wicker's complaint: the Sandinistas had let him down, *after all he'd done for them.* And so he let them know he felt sore. Still, even in his anger and disillusionment, he was fair: "Human rights abuses chargeable to the Sandinistas are . . . surely no worse than those under other governments the U.S. has found acceptable—South Korea, for instance, or Chile or the Philippines." This is a delectable piece of "evenhandedness." Here is Nicaragua, whose human rights record, on the testimony of Amnesty International and Americas Watch, has been decent (and, by the standards of most regimes coming in the wake of a long and barbaric tyranny, extraordinary), being called "no worse" than the police regimes of South Korea, Chile and the Philippines, which have tortured, murdered and imprisoned scores of thousands of their unfortunate subjects.

The meat of Wicker's complaints that the Sandinistas have lent "plausibility to Administration charges against their regime" came with his accusation, "When they held national elections, they insisted on doing so under rules that caused the major opposition parties to withdraw." Even the Reagan Administration scarcely bothers to claim that anymore. When Arturo Cruz, well freighted with C.I.A. funds, returned to the United States from Nicaragua embarrassed by the tiny crowds he had attracted and announced the withdrawal of his Coordinadora coalition from the elections, his associates freely conceded that he had never had the slightest intention of participating. Virgilio Godoy, head of the Independent Liberal Party, tried to withdraw but was too late to get his name off the register, amid detailed charges that the U.S. Embassy had offered him substantial sums if he would pull out. He now sits in the National Assembly. If Wicker bothered to read the reports of the Latin American Studies Association and of international observers, such as Lord Chitnis of Britain, he would see that the Nicaraguan elections of November 4, 1984, were considered to have been conducted fairly.

In another masterful liberal trope, Wicker adds that when the Sandinistas won, "as assured by their own rules, they failed to prove the kind of popular support many observers

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ALEXANDER COCKBURN

believed they really had." The Sandinistas won about 65 percent of the popular vote, which compares favorably with last November's U.S. popular vote for the landsliding President Reagan. That they got 65 percent instead of 85 percent could be taken as evidence that the elections were fair. But if they had won 85 percent, Wicker would have written that "the lopsided results convincingly demonstrate how the Sandinistas fixed the rules."

As one might expect, Wicker was unhappy that President Daniel Ortega Saavedra flew to Moscow right after Congress denied Reagan's request for aid to the *contras*. Would Wicker have told Ortega to fly to Washington to get the aid to keep his country going in the face of U.S. attacks?

On the matter of the recent decree, Wicker is wrong when he says civil liberties have been suspended "to an extent not before seen during [the Sandinistas'] regime." In fact, the formal ambit of the 1982 emergency measures was greater. And it is hard to conceive of how Wicker can write of the decree lending "substance to Mr. Reagan's charges that the Sandinistas systematically abuse human and civil rights" without realizing the ludicrous disproportion of these pained reflections. There is systematic abuse of human and civil rights in Nicaragua, and it is being perpetrated by men encouraged by President ("I paid for this rapist") Reagan, organized by the C.I.A. and the National Security Council, and subsidized by the U.S. taxpayer, who has had the choice in recent months of either underwriting the tax-exempt contributions of "private" donors illegally contracted by the N.S.C. or furnishing the funds appropriated by Congress.

Wicker's final conclusion is that the Sandinistas "surely are their own worst enemy." Where does that leave the United States, which paid for the *contras* who, to take one recent case, on September 4 shot and killed eight mothers traveling in grain trucks on an open road in daylight to visit their sons on an army base? Fourteen more were wounded. One survivor said later: "We screamed, 'Stop shooting! We're civilians!' But then the *contras* shouted back, 'We're F.D.N.!' and kept on firing." Just as the Israeli government was delighted by the fallout from the Achille Lauro hijacking, the White House has been similarly overjoyed by the Nicaraguan emergency decree, since the Administration's policy is to engineer by military, economic and diplomatic violence just such measures. The only puzzle is why the Reagan people are now lamenting the denial of liberties whose existence they had never previously recognized.

The Day of the Jackboot

When the Westmoreland/CBS and Sharon/*Time* show trials were running earlier this year, newspapers, newsmagazines and the airwaves were full of the unfolding sagas, and columnists discoursed amply on their significance. In the last month there has been a trial in the United States which is far more momentous in terms of erosion of freedom and increase in the power of government. Yet the press made no great clamor during the trial or following the verdict against Samuel Loring Morison, who on October 17 became the first person to be prosecuted successfully under the 1917 Espionage Act for giving information to the press.

The government had accused Morison of passing classified national defense information to the editors of *Jane's Defence Weekly*, a British publication, and unless the verdict is reversed on appeal the government will have vastly increased powers of censorship by way of prosecution for unauthorized possession of a classified document. More significantly, the government will have an extremely intimidating weapon with which to go after those who give the press classified information. Those who remember what happened to the appeal in the Snepp case are not too sanguine about Morison's chances on appeal. The trial judge in that case had made several highly prejudicial remarks during the courtroom proceedings, and Snepp's attorneys had hoped that would provide grounds for a reversal. But when they came to examine the transcripts of the trial, the prejudicial remarks had disappeared entirely. In the Morison case ominous difficulties in the transcribing process were noted by connoisseurs.

Caro Bettino

More letters from President Reagan to Italian Prime Minister Bettino Craxi have surfaced. They show the President eager to repair damage to U.S.-Italian relations in the wake of the Achille Lauro affair. For example: "Dearest Bettino, I'm really sorry about our fight last night. I couldn't get to sleep, worrying about what is going on between us. I have always loved you and I love you now; more than ever, because now I'm so afraid of losing you. You said yesterday on the phone that there seemed to be some sort of a wall between us, like glass. Well, I want to break that glass. Could we meet in New York and go to some little *trattoria* like we did in the old days, drink Chianti and just talk and talk? Love, Ron."

On the Wing

§ Apropos my recent item on the ABC 1986 miniseries *AMERIKA* a reader writes:

> During the Korean War years I was one of the writers dishing up propaganda programs for Armed Forces Radio Service (A.F.R.S.). Among our distortions was a series of half-hour shows titled *Springfield, USA*. The time: ten years after the war, or 1960. The Russians had taken over the country by conquest and were engaged in the brutal communization of defenseless America. Each episode detailed the abuse, torture and killing of stalwart but outmuscled Americans. Did the "creators" of *AMERIKA* gain access to old A.F.R.S. files? Or did one or more of the old crew of hacks sell their *Springfield, USA* under a new title?

§ "The Greenpeace campaign is fundamentally violent and dangerous. . . . That the French government was prepared to use force against the Rainbow Warrior . . . suggests that the government had its priorities straight." This was from the lead editorial in *The Asian Wall Street Journal* for August 22, under the title "Mitterrand's Finest Hour."

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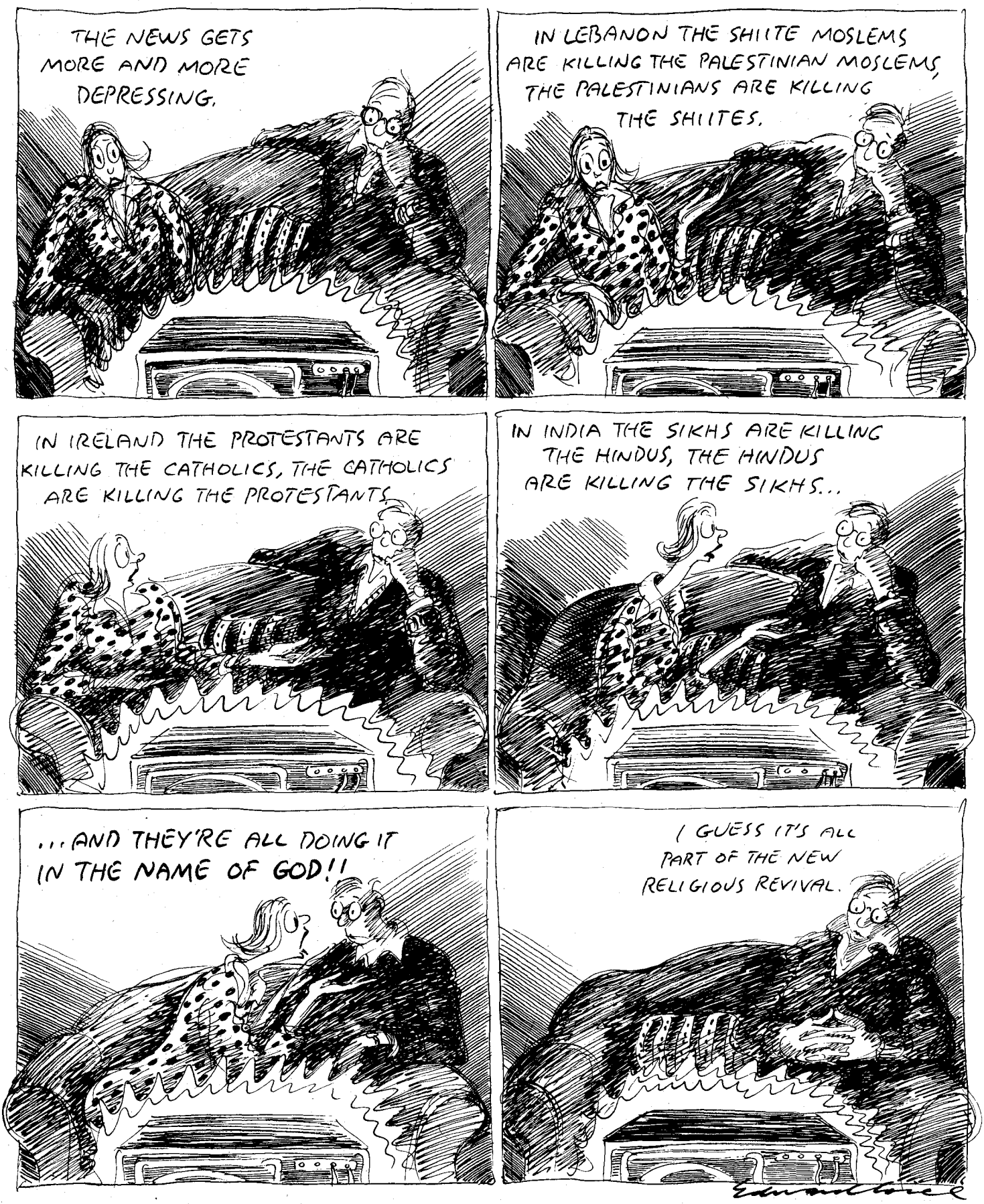
The Age of Belief

EDWARD SOREL


THE NEWS GETS MORE AND MORE DEPRESSING.
IN LEBANON THE SHIITE MOSLEMS ARE KILLING THE PALESTINIAN MOSLEMS, THE PALESTINIANS ARE KILLING THE SHIITES.
IN IRELAND THE PROTESTANTS ARE KILLING THE CATHOLICS, THE CATHOLICS ARE KILLING THE PROTESTANTS.
IN INDIA THE SIKHS ARE KILLING THE HINDUS, THE HINDUS ARE KILLING THE SIKHS...
...AND THEY'RE ALL DOING IT IN THE NAME OF GOD!!
I GUESS IT'S ALL PART OF THE NEW RELIGIOUS REVIVAL.
Edward Sorel

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ARTICLES.

THE REGISTRATION STRATEGY—I

Trying to Break Down the Barriers

RICHARD A. CLOWARD AND FRANCES FOX PIVEN

The election of 1980 provoked many on the left to reassess the importance of electoral politics. One expression of that renewed interest was the mobilization in 1984 of the largest voter registration movement in memory, perhaps even in American history. The hope was that new voters from the bottom of the income scale could reverse the electoral tide that brought the right to power. It is time to try to understand why that did not happen.

The 1982 midterm elections gave us good reason to hope that new voters would make a difference. The severe recession produced an upsurge in voting by blacks, blue-collar workers and the unemployed. Turnout rose for the first time in two decades, reaching 64 million, or 10 million more than in 1978, and swelling the vote for Democratic candidates for the House by 6 million. The election of a number of black mayors in 1983 confirmed the upsurge. Taken together, those events suggested that an electoral mobilization had become possible among 50 million to 60 million Americans who are unregistered, two-thirds of whom make less than the median income. It was, the *Congressional Quarterly* said in 1983, a time of "potentially historic significance for the Democratic Party. . . . With the possible exception of fundamentalist Christians, [there is] no new, reliably Republican voting bloc to mobilize. The likely GOP voters, for the most part, have already been voting."

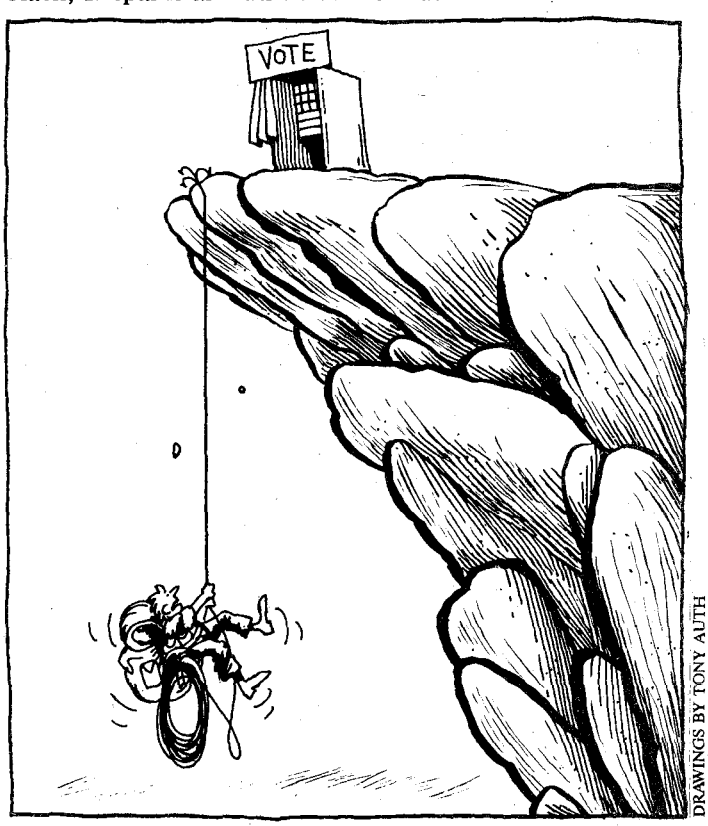
Republican strategists recognized the danger. Their pollster Lance Terrance concluded, "For every new voter the Republicans pick up, the Democrats pick up two." Right-wing syndicated columnist James Kilpatrick warned:

> Make no mistake. Democratic leaders will go after votes from blacks, Hispanics, welfare recipients and disenchanted women . . . that is where the votes are. If the Republicans fail to mount a massive effort to register likely new Republican voters, the Republicans will take a drubbing in 1984. A Republican registration drive must concentrate on middle-income whites and Hispanics, conservative women and young people, and non-union families.

And so it did. With a pot of $10 million to $15 million, the Republicans fashioned the most technologically sophisticated registration drive ever. Using computer tapes from the Bureau of the Census, credit organizations, departments of motor vehicles and boards of registrars, they merged and purged until they could pinpoint unregistered two-car owners living in upscale neighborhoods. Volunteers telephoned likely prospects, and if a person said Reagan was doing a good job, a canvasser stopped by his or her home or mailed registration cards.

The Republican effort was supplemented by a mass mobilization among evangelical Christians in the South, the Midwest and Southern California. Working through independent groups, like the Moral Majority and the Assemblies of God, and mainline denominations, like the Baptists, Methodists and Presbyterians, evangelicals registered 3 million voters during the 1980 Presidential campaign, according to their estimate. In 1984, 40,000 evangelical ministers formed the American Coalition for Traditional Values, whose main focus was voter registration. The leaders of the Christian right have learned well the lesson of the Southern civil rights movement: the church can mobilize masses of people for political action.

Meanwhile, the Democratic National Committee issued press releases announcing a multimillion-dollar registration campaign that never materialized. In part that was because available funds were consumed in the primary fights, and in part because Walter Mondale decided against a registration strategy. *Newsweek* quoted Mike Ford, the Mondale campaign's field director, as saying that a Mondale victory "is nearly impossible with the current electorate." He urged that $12 million be spent to register at least 5 million new black, Hispanic and union voters. But his recommendation



DRAWINGS BY TONY AUTH

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was ignored. About $2 million was distributed to state and local Democratic organizations, but it was used to get out the vote among those already registered rather than to enroll new voters. Ironically, then, one party galvanized itself to cancel out an electoral mobilization that the other party never attempted.

The 1984 Drive

While the Democrats sat on the sidelines, voter registration drives were mounted by a spectrum of organizations, from unions to black churches to nonpartisan groups. The nonpartisan groups ran the largest drives, underwritten mainly by foundations (at a level of about $5 million) and by private donors. With the exception of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the Southern Voter Registration Education Project and the Southwest Voter Registration Education Project, most had never engaged in voter registration before. A coalition of women's groups was coordinated by the Women's Vote Project, while the efforts of black groups were coordinated by Operation Big Vote. Public Interest Research Groups (PIRGs) and the United States Student Association (U.S.S.A.) reached college students. The Churches' Committee for Voter Registration, financed on a small scale by Northern Protestant denominations, registered mainly low-income and minority voters. Drives were organized among Hispanics by the Southwest Voter Registration Education Project and by the newly formed Midwest Voter Registration Education Project. The Citizen Action network turned to voter registration, along with a number of peace and environmental groups. Project Vote! recognized that door-to-door canvassing is ineffective and became the first group to register people waiting in lines for food stamps and unemployment benefits—a technique that was adopted by other groups as the campaign grew. Another new group, Human Service Employees Registration, Voting and Education Campaign (Human Serve), recruited volunteers to canvass in the waiting rooms of public agencies and attempted to persuade public officials and the executives of voluntary social agencies to direct their employees to register people who used their services.

Voter registration drives at the local level often had a camaraderie reminiscent of the peace and civil rights movements of the 1960s. Acorn mounted direct action and civil disobedience campaigns against obstructive voter registration officials in Bridgeport, Connecticut, and St. Louis. The N.A.A.C.P. backed an Overground Railroad march which began in Richmond, Virginia, on August 20 and ended in New York City on Labor Day, registering some 35,000 people in urban black neighborhoods along the way. Ninety-one students joined the Freedom Summer '84 Voter Registration Campaign, sponsored by Human Serve and the U.S.S.A., to organize ten-week drives in unemployment and social welfare offices in sixty-three cities in twenty-three states. The U.S.S.A. recruited sixty of the students, whose $1,500 stipends were paid by foundations, and Human Serve persuaded thirty-one graduate schools of social work to recruit and finance the rest. Those schools, together with local social agencies, churches, grass-roots community groups, N.A.A.C.P. chapters and cooperating voter registration organizations provided the student coordinators with offices and telephones. The Freedom Summer coordinators organized grass-roots coalitions or staffed existing ones, recruited thousands of volunteers and signed up 230,000 people. They used dramatic tactics—for example, in Houston, they called themselves "freedom riders" and registered thousands of people on city buses serving the poor districts.

A general mobilization of activists took place when seventy-odd organizations participated in the October 4 National Day of Voter Registration initiated by Human Serve. Canvassing in public housing and at unemployment and social welfare offices, volunteers from these organizations added about 225,000 to the registration rolls. In New York City, NYPIRG organizers and students, together with volunteers from social welfare agencies, the Gray Panthers and peace organizations, such as the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, completed 62,000 cards in a single day, causing the head of the Board of Elections to complain to *The New York Times* about registration "fanatics." On the same day, Gerald Powers, then acting dean of social work at the University of Indiana–Purdue, recruited students and human service workers to join with the Citizen's Action Coalition of Indiana to bus 4,000 low-income and minority people to the elections office. When the doors closed at midnight, the thousand or so who were still unregistered forced the office to process applications until 4 A.M., producing front-page publicity about Indiana's archaic registration laws.

Prompted by the organizers' increasing complaints that election officials were impeding voter registration efforts (by, among other things, refusing to deputize campaign volunteers as registrars), a consortium of legal defense organizations was formed, including the American Civil Liberties Union, the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, the National Lawyers Guild, the Center for Constitutional Rights, the Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights Under Law and the League of Women Voters Legal Defense Fund. Lawsuits were jointly planned and filed in more than a dozen states. As a result of an action brought by Connecticut Planned Parenthood, Citizen Action and Human Serve, a Federal judge ordered Waterbury, Connecticut, election officials to deputize volunteers. Project Vote! went far toward establishing the right of volunteers to canvass in the waiting rooms of public agencies by winning nine suits in Federal courts in seven states.

What It Achieved

Even with the Democratic Party on the sidelines, the national voter rolls increased by 12.1 million over 1980, or 3.3 percent, raising the level of registered Americans to 62 percent—roughly 108 million out of the 174 million who were eligible. We estimate that organized drives can take credit for a net increase of 7 million (the other 5 million could be expected to have registered on their own).

How many of those people actually voted? A study by

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Peter D. Hart Research Associates reported that "the overall turnout of new registrants closely approximated the turnout of registered voters." Project Vote! and the Churches' Committee for Voter Registration also found that 70 percent and 80 percent, respectively, of the people they registered on welfare, food stamp and unemployment lines had voted. The figures for the national electorate are not much different: 62 percent were registered and 53 percent voted, which means that about 85 percent of all registrants voted. A *New York Times*/CBS News poll conducted the week after the election also concluded that "most of those who did not vote were not registered."

The Republican Party and evangelical church networks can probably take credit for about half of the 7 million who were registered by drives. Their registrants were white, better-off and largely Southern. According to A. James Reichley of the Brookings Institution, evangelicals now make up about 20 percent of the eligible electorate. The rise of an activist Christian right has been an important asset in the Republican Party's effort to build a business-populist coalition.

The nonpartisan organizations were largely responsible for registering the other 3 million to 4 million voters, mainly in the North. Our best guess is that half of them were white and middle-class. Women's organizations frequently canvassed at shopping malls; student groups, on campuses; and Citizen Action groups, in middle-class neighborhoods. Only a few organizations, such as Acorn and Project Vote!, specifically targeted groups at the bottom.

Consequently, the 1982-84 drive expanded the active electorate without reducing its upscale tilt; it was a class stalemate. Not surprisingly, the party preferences of new registrants closely resembled those of the general electorate. The Hart poll showed that 42 percent of new registrants enrolled as Republicans, 24 percent as independents and 34 percent as Democrats. In turn, 61 percent said they had voted for Reagan.

Future registration campaigns are also likely to end in a class stalemate. Despite losing four of the last five Presidential elections, the Democratic National Committee does not seem ready to enlist new constituencies from the bottom, and the Republican National Committee and kindred right-wing movements have the financial resources, the organizational competence and the commitment to register enough people from the higher strata so as to equal or exceed nonpartisan efforts among low-income groups. The political arithmetic is simple: a reservoir of 20 million unregistered people above the median income level can be drawn on for years to cancel out those who may be registered from the 40 million below the median. The future of the registration drive is shaping up to be a treadmill, with the left having to run faster and faster to stay in the same place.

Institutional reform is the obvious alternative. In other democracies, governments are responsible for certifying citizens as voters, either automatically when they come of age or, as in Britain and Canada, by dispatching canvassers to their homes to enroll them. As a result, turnout rates in national elections elsewhere range from 70 percent to 95 per-

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cent. But in the United States, where almost two-fifths of the electorate is unregistered, turnout barely exceeds 50 percent. The main organizing lesson of the 1982-84 registration campaign is that there is little hope for a more representative electorate until the registration system is reformed. The question is how to accomplish that in the face of opposition by the political parties.

Keeping the Poor From the Polls

The system of barriers to registration that has lowered voter turnout in the United States in the twentieth century was erected by the political parties at the end of the nineteenth century, and it has been sustained by them, especially at the state and local level, ever since. Following the turbulent election of 1896, literacy and long-term residency requirements were enacted; this depressed voting among the poor and uneducated throughout the country. In the South, these and measures such as poll taxes succeeded in disenfranchising not only blacks but most poor whites as well.

To enforce the laws, the states established a county system of periodic personal registration. People were required to appear before election officials to prove their eligibility. The offices were located in county seats (thus creating an income test, since some people couldn't afford the travel costs); they were rarely open on nights or weekends, so that people had to take time off from work (another income test); and antagonistic election personnel fended off unwanted voters who appeared before them.

By the 1920s, these demobilizing measures had succeeded. In Presidential elections throughout the last half of the nineteenth century, the turnout of eligible voters averaged 75 percent. By the 1920s, it had fallen to about 50 percent (25 percent in the South), and it has never fully recovered.

Although the laws restricting eligibility to vote have been overturned as a result of civil rights protests and Federal voting rights legislation, the administrative barriers remain largely intact. There is still only one registration office in most counties; it is still usually open only during working hours; and it is likely to be administered by political appointees hostile to minority groups and the poor.

Even when such registration barriers are initially overcome, they reassert themselves. Half of all voters change their domiciles between Presidential elections. Those who move to new jurisdictions must reregister, and those who move within a jurisdiction must notify the board of elections of their new address, which is tantamount to repeating the registration process. In this way, administrative procedures constantly reproduce the upwardly skewed electorate.

These administrative barriers are not limited to the South, nor are they aimed just at excluding blacks. They exist nationwide and are directed at the working class as a whole. Indeed, more than half of the twelve major voter registration suits filed during the recent campaign were taken against election officials in Northern industrial states—Massachusetts, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Michigan and New Hampshire.

Registration by mail, which is now permitted in twenty-two states, with about 60 percent of the population, has not helped much because election officials are unwilling to mail out forms or distribute them at public places. In any case, the forms themselves are booby traps. The Board of Elections in New York City discards any that are completed in pencil, signed only on one side or with a middle initial or social title on one side but not the other.

Once the exclusionary voter registration system was in place, the parties could more or less ignore poor and minority people except when they rebelled, as in the 1930s and the 1960s. To compensate for the underrepresentation of its working-class and minority constituencies, the Democratic Party forged the peculiar coalitions that characterize American politics: between unionized urban workers, including black urban workers, and the segregationist South, for example. When the solid South began to crumble as a base of Democratic support after 1948, party leaders attempted to fashion an even unlikelier alliance between the big-city poor and affluent suburbanites. Once such coalitions are formed, party leaders have yet another reason to shun recruitment from the bottom. New voters make new demands and generate conflicts over policy with other blocs in the coalition. Thus, existing voters themselves contribute to the party's reluctance to reach downward.

In the 1984 election the Democratic leadership demonstrated its unwillingness to risk the internal disruptions associated with a massive influx of voters. To be sure, even if the party had participated seriously in the voter registration competition, the outcome of the Presidential race would not have been much different. Just as Jimmy Carter lost in 1980 because he failed to reduce unemployment or halt the decline in income, Ronald Reagan won because of the unprecedented average increase of 5.8 percent in real disposable income during the campaign year. Americans vote their pocketbooks, as do voters in other Western democracies.

However, the economic upturn does not explain why Reagan won by a landslide. After all, a good many people were worse off than they were under Carter. The Bureau of the Census reported that the income gap between the top and bottom groups was wider in 1984 than at any time since it began gathering such data, in 1947. Unemployment was as high as when Reagan took office. The number of people living below the poverty level rose from 11 percent in 1979 to 15.3 percent in 1983. And plant closings and farm foreclosures were generating widespread hardship and anxiety in the Rust Belt and the Farm Belt.

So there was a natural opposition, but the Democrats refused to lead it. They did not reach out to those who were worse off under Reagan—either those who were registered or those who were not—by framing the issues that reflected their grievances or offering bold economic programs. A spirited campaign showing how Reagan's policies had worsened the lot of those on the bottom would have spurred registration and voting, and a flood of new registrants would have injected class issues into the campaign. The grievances that led to the upsurge of "have-nots" in 1982 continued to be felt in 1984. But they were muted by Democratic Party leaders, who allowed Reagan's "good times"

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rhetoric to dominate the campaign, thus isolating low-income groups and converting what should have been a narrow victory into a landslide.

The Democratic Party is in limbo. One obvious way to strengthen it is to mobilize new voters at the bottom. But party leaders show no such inclination. They claim that the defeats of 1980 and 1984 are evidence of a sea change in American public opinion, even of a conservative realignment, which compels them to pay less attention than ever to the lower classes.

That explanation is dubious. After all, the Democrats did not try to galvanize support by attacking those Reagan policies with which an overwhelming majority of Americans disagreed: cuts in social programs, increases in military spending, tax reductions for the rich and the attack on reproductive rights. It is not the so-called conservative mood that paralyzed the party; rather it is the resistance to change of Congressional, state and local incumbents who prefer a stable electorate. It is party oligarchs who remember the challenges from the McGovernites in the 1970s and who fear that another insurgent leadership would be thrust upon them by a flood of new voters. Also, the party's need for business contributions is always in tension with mass participation by the working class and minority groups. In sum, the national Democratic Party is more concerned with maintaining its internal stability than with building a party of opposition. But there is a strategy of reform open to us, which will be discussed in Part II. □

HOUSE DEMOCRATS

Rambo Plays The Capitol

FRANK DONNER

Over the past three years a substantial number of Democrats in both houses of Congress have abandoned traditional liberal positions, especially in the areas of foreign affairs and national security. For the most part, White House initiatives in those areas have been funded with the approval of the Democratic House. This bipartisanship has been attributed to a shift in popular sentiment rooted in the rebirth of national pride, which was wounded by the Iranian hostage crisis. In addition, Ronald Reagan's 1984 landslide frightened some Democrats into trying to beat the Republicans at their own game. Eager to do well in the upcoming Congressional elections and worried about a possible loss of seats from reapportionment as a result of population shifts to the Sun Belt, they lack the courage to fight back against Republican attacks on their patriotism or Administration prop-

Frank Donner, a frequent contributor to The Nation, *is the author, most recently, of* The Legacy of Haymarket: A History of Police Repression in Urban America.

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aganda that U.S. weapons are inferior to those of the Soviet Union.

The feeling that they need a new image, among other influences, has led the Democrats to make a wide range of concessions in House floor votes on defense authorizations, which are sometimes multiplied in the House-Senate conference. In the past session they approved a $150 million increase in funding for the Midgetman nuclear missile (reduced in conference to $100 million), $2.5 billion for the Strategic Defense Initiative (increased to $2.75 billion in conference, with various restraints and spending guidelines dropped) and a hefty nerve gas authorization. House Democrats have permitted the lure of fat contracts for their districts to overcome fears raised by the most serious budget deficit crisis in U.S. history. By doing so, they have provided the Administration with leverage for cutting domestic spending. In the process, U.S. obligations under arms control agreements have been abandoned.

The House retreat on military spending is symbolized by the actions of Representative Les Aspin, chair of the House Armed Services Committee and once regarded as Horatio at the bridge against an unbridled arms buildup. Aspin has played a key role in inducing the Democrat-controlled House to follow the Republican lead in approving increases in arms spending. Indeed, it is ironic that the Democrats' general reawakening to the bloated military budget came after disclosures about Pentagon waste, which was encouraged by the very authorizations they had originally supported. Many Democrats committed to arms restraints felt that Aspin had betrayed their trust. He recently told the press that the Democrats should support some Pentagon requests in order to avoid being called leftists; now he is holding hearings on the Reagan arms buildup, which that logic made possible.

House Democrats have not only made generous appropriations to the Defense Department; they have also encouraged the Pentagon lobbying strategy of using contracts as bait in winning approval of spending requests. Pork-barreling aside, they have ignored the reality of the United States' superiority over the Soviet Union in individual weapons and weapons systems, and have downgraded the goal of arms control embodied in numerous treaties. Most recently the House leadership forced the abandonment of a drive for a comprehensive test ban treaty, claiming that it would prejudice the upcoming summit in Geneva. At best the Democrats pay lip service to existing agreements by adding cosmetic phrases. They also conceal long-term commitments to weapons programs in the appropriation process by authorizing initial payments for systems on which increasingly larger bills will come due in future years—the "stretchout."

In its successful Star Wars campaign in the House, the Pentagon's Strategic Defense Initiative Organization skillfully targeted Democratic holdouts and fence-sitters with an unprecedented arsenal of pressures, personal briefings and procurement promises. The magnitude of the Democratic cave-in on armaments issues was revealed in the House debate over nerve gas funding. As a result of White House and Pentagon pressure, Congress voted earlier this year to approve the production of binary nerve gas shells. The $155 million authorization, as yet to be appropriated, is a down payment on an estimated $2.6 billion outlay.

The Reagan Administration had long pushed for ending the moratorium on nerve gas imposed by President Nixon in 1969. In July 1982 the House overwhelmingly rejected the White House's request for binary gas production funds. The resistance was finally overcome this year after a full court press led by Caspar Weinberger and his aides in appearances before House military affairs and appropriations committees. Teams of Pentagon lobbyists conducted 155 briefings of individual representatives, claiming the program would improve safety and promote arms control. In March the White House organized a special commission to gild its proposal with professional expertise and moral authority. Heading the panel was retired diplomat Walter J. Stoessel, who has impeccable cold war credentials. On June 17 the now-classic final scene was played: a select group of representatives was invited to the White House to hear a personal appeal by President Reagan.

Some Congressional skepticism remained and was expressed in two conditions attached to the authorization measure: a production delay until October 1987 and a formal North Atlantic Treaty Organization agreement to store the weapons in Europe. But White House-Pentagon pressure prevailed in the conference committee, which weakened the conditions.

Kenneth Adelman, a conservative Democrat who is director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, wrote an article for the *New York Times* Op-Ed page that seemed to speak to popular fears about nerve gas. Adelman expressed horror at the evils of chemical warfare but explained that the United States needs a modernized chemical weapons system both as a deterrent and as a bargaining chip. He failed to mention that the European response to the U.S. binary gas program has been negative, that the advanced binary gas system Congress approved has no counterpart in the Soviet arsenal and that scientists have determined that the "yellow rain" he attributed to "Soviet surrogates" in Southeast Asia was bee feces and not a chemical weapon.

Support for the Administration's weapons buildup is paralleled by increased interventionist sentiment among Congressional Democrats. For example, on July 11 the House repealed the Clark amendment, which had barred military intervention in Angola, and voted to suspend aid to Mozambique until its Soviet bloc military advisers were removed (the aid was restored in conference). The argument for repeal was based not only on the presence of Cuban troops in Angola but also on the dubious theory that without them the socialist regime would fall overnight. Wholly ignored was Angola's constructive role in autonomy talks on Namibia and its apparent willingness to negotiate on Cuban troop withdrawal. By reviving the threat of U.S. intervention, the Administration and Congress increased Angola's reliance on the Soviet bloc.

Another example of Democratic interventionism is a pro-

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vision championed by liberal Representative Stephen J. Solarz in a foreign aid authorization bill approved by the House, which provides $5 million in aid for non-Communist Cambodian resistance forces fighting the Vietnamese puppet regime. The amendment was intended to benefit exclusively the forces of Prince Norodom Sihanouk and to bypass the murderous Khmer Rouge. But veteran monitors of the conflict point out that the logistics of distributing the aid as well as the nature of Cambodian resistance politics make it virtually inevitable that the Khmer Rouge will be the prime, if not the only, beneficiary of the funding. The House overwhelmingly approved the Solarz measure, primarily as a reflexive bit of anti-Vietnamese machismo.

As for the Administration's blatant efforts to overthrow the government of Nicaragua, the Democrats' response has been governed by a formula of evasion: one may criticize the *contra*-Administration alliance, but one must not appear to favor the Sandinistas. That means expressing no official concern over U.S. treaty violations, conducting no inquiry into whether the Administration is waging war against Nicaragua without Congressional authorization and showing no concern about the Administration's refusal to submit to the jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice in the controversy over the mining of Corinto harbor and its rejection of the Contadora peace process.

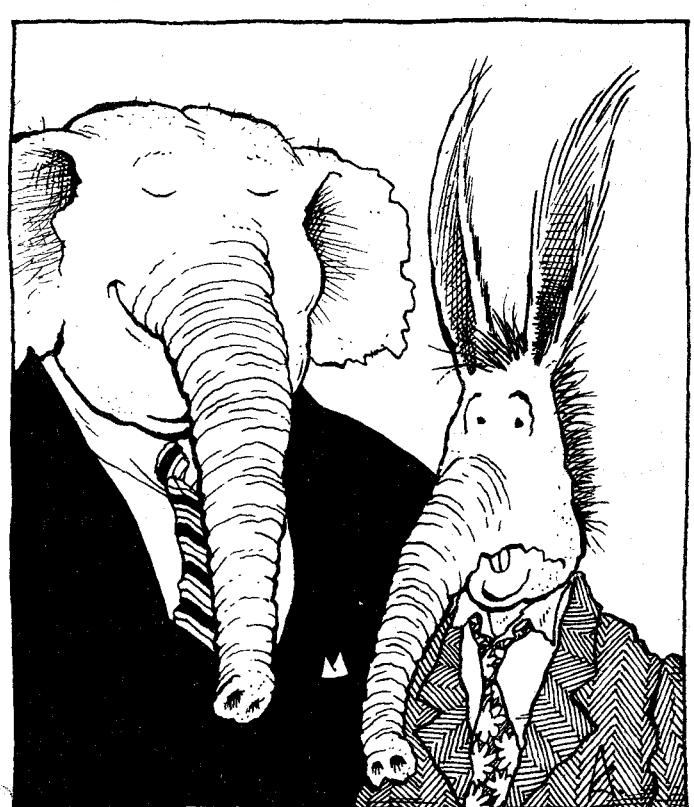
In June, Congress modified the Boland amendment, which had banned military aid to groups opposing the Nicaraguan government and forbade the Central Intelligence Agency to operate in the area, and approved $27 million in "humanitarian" aid. The resistance to an all-out *contra* alliance coupled with the surrender to the wave of anti-Nicaragua sentiment touched off by President Daniel Ortega Saavedra's trip to Moscow reveals the schizoid character of mainline Democratic thinking on Central America. True, the Democrats rebuked the Administration by restraining the C.I.A. and restricting aid to nonmilitary purposes. But the aid legitimized the *contra* operation and keeps it going. Therefore no one can charge the Democrats later with having "lost Nicaragua." Subsequent to the aid gesture, the Foley amendment, which limits the President's authority to send combat troops to Nicaragua unilaterally, was so riddled with last-minute changes—all of them accepted by the Democrats—that the Republican whip crowed that it had been "completely defanged."

The House subsequently authorized an "information exchange" with the *contras* in a supplemental appropriation. But Democratic Representative Dave McCurdy went all the way with language in the Intelligence Authorization Act of 1986, which, according to the report on the bill, permits "provision of intelligence information or advice to the *contras*."

Aid to the *contras* is now being funneled through the State Department's Nicaraguan Humanitarian Assistance Office. No longer is the elimination of a "Marxist-Leninist" government, elected however fairly by its citizens, the stated motivation for intervention. The new U.S. mission was glowingly expounded by President Reagan in August: "We cannot turn our backs on people who desire nothing more than the freedom we take for granted." In playing the freedom card, President Reagan is seeking to close the gap between the hard right and the centrist-liberal sectors in the political spectrum on issues involving arms control and intervention. The Administration's new policy links its core constituency with mainstream Democratic forces that have gradually accepted the late Senator Henry Jackson's view that the future of domestic liberalism depends on a vigorous commitment to anti-Communism.

Several prominent Administration foreign policy hawks are identified with this once-marginal Democratic tendency and its offshoot, the Coalition for a Democratic Majority (C.D.M.). Among them are chief Geneva negotiator Max Kampelman, Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs Elliott Abrams (whose career began in Jackson's office), Jeane Kirkpatrick and her former aide Carl Gershman. Once the director of Social Democrats, U.S.A., Gershman now heads the National Endowment for Democracy, which serves as a ministry of propaganda for the Administration's freedom crusade. Given the conservative trend, it is hardly surprising that the House Democrats voted to fund Gershman's outfit, with the usual cosmetic conditions, or, before that, another blatant propaganda operation, Radio Martí.

A policy network has emerged to consolidate the alliance between the Reaganite right and the cold war liberals. One component of it, Friends of the Democratic Center in Central America (Prodemca), has a strong membership among C.D.M.'ers, functionaries of the A.F.L.-C.I.O. and its affiliates, neoconservatives and plain right-wingers. The group has appealed for funds to disseminate its opposition to Nicaraguan totalitarianism of both extremes and to generate pressure on Congress to send "an unmistakable message to



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Managua, Moscow and Havana." Some members of this coalition yearn for the installation of a Somoza-style regime, while the moderates want to force the elected leadership in Managua to share power with its opponents, whose views are more congenial to those of the C.D.M. persuasion. Despite its professed commitment to democracy, Prodemca makes no pretense of distancing itself from U.S. interventionism.

In the period ahead, the Democratic House faces two key challenges. It must recognize that the Administration's drive for an arms buildup has been based on a wildly exaggerated evaluation of the Soviet threat and that without strong pressure the upcoming summit will come to nothing but sanctimonious hype. In Central America, another Administration deception must be confronted: the use of the face-lifted *contra* organization to carry out intervention in the name of "freedom." History suggests that the Democrats will be no more successful at out-Ramboing Rambo than an earlier generation of liberals was at out McCarthying McCarthy. The sooner they give up the futile and dangerous attempt, the better—both for them and for the rest of us. □

BLACK DEMOCRATS

Time for a Third Party?

RON WALTERS

Black Democrats' loyalty to their traditional party has been shaken by the leadership's attempt to redirect the party's course after its crushing defeat by Ronald Reagan last November. A series of slights to the black constituency began in February of this year, when the Democratic National Committee picked Illinois Comptroller Roland Burris to be vice chair of the party over Gary, Indiana, Mayor Richard Hatcher, the incumbent and the preference of the Black Democratic Caucus. In the past the D.N.C. ratified the caucus's choice. Next, the D.N.C. recommended that party and elected officials continue to be ex officio delegates to the next convention, despite a challenge to that practice by supporters of the Rev. Jesse Jackson. Thus, it tried to pre-empt the Fairness Commission, the body which writes the rules on delegate selection [see Elaine Ciulla Kamarck, "Fight Over Delegate Rules for '88," *The Nation*, March 2]. The D.N.C. also decided that most members of the commission would be picked by regional party caucuses, thus stacking it with party officials rather than rank-and-file Democrats. As if that weren't enough, Don Fowler, a white party regular from South Carolina, was appointed to head the commission, rather than Maynard Jackson, the black former Mayor of Atlanta and Jesse Jackson's choice. In rejecting him and Hatcher the party sent a powerful negative signal to black Democrats.

At hearings in New Orleans in August, the Fairness Commission pledged to be sympathetic to Jackson's proposals for reforming the rules governing delegate selection. However, on October 18 it decided to reduce the threshold percentage of votes by which each Congressional district selects delegates, from 20 percent to 15 percent, and to expand the number of members of Congress and party officials who automatically become delegates. Jackson had called for the elimination of all thresholds, since 44 percent, or more than 1 million, of his voters had been effectively disenfranchised by this rule in the 1984 primaries. Now, regardless of who the candidates are in 1988, millions more of the votes of blacks and other minorities will not count because of the way in which their populations are distributed among Congressional districts. Ironically, an expensive and time-consuming effort involving charitable, civic and civil rights organizations has been made to register such voters, most of whom are Democrats.

Democratic leaders have also grown sensitive to the charge, leveled by the G.O.P. in the 1984 election, that theirs is the party of "special interests." As a result, they have attempted to reduce the influence of minority caucuses in party affairs. For example, at its January 31 meeting the D.N.C. abolished the right of "officially recognized" caucuses to seats on all standing committees, as mandated by the 1984 convention.

Although it allowed the black, Hispanic and women's caucuses to retain their seats on the executive committee, the D.N.C.'s swipe at the party's caucuses, together with attacks on Jackson's influence at the meeting, smacked of scapegoating. Such treatment makes one wonder how long blacks and other minority groups will continue to play an organized role in the party; other major interest groups are unlikely to suffer a comparable loss of clout.

The Democrats are now frantically competing for lost constituencies, like the no-longer-solid South. The various tactics they have chosen to appeal to Reaganesque constituencies may force black Democrats to become even more independent in the next Presidential election.

The Jackson campaign was an independent movement in the party, mounted despite the opposition of some black Democratic leaders and certainly not welcomed by the front-running candidate. Walter Mondale never understood the political meaning of the Jackson campaign. It challenged the Democratic Presidential candidate's "right" to the minority vote and forced him to compete for it. Starting with a solid black base, Jackson drew support from the party's left wing and from outside the party. Thus, he was able to rally a constituency to which regular Democratic candidates have seldom appealed and which otherwise might have supported a third-party movement.

This independent campaign raised issues that rallied a

Ron Walters, a professor of political science at Howard University, was deputy campaign manager for issues and political strategy in the Jackson campaign and is a member of the technical advisory committee of the Fairness Commission.

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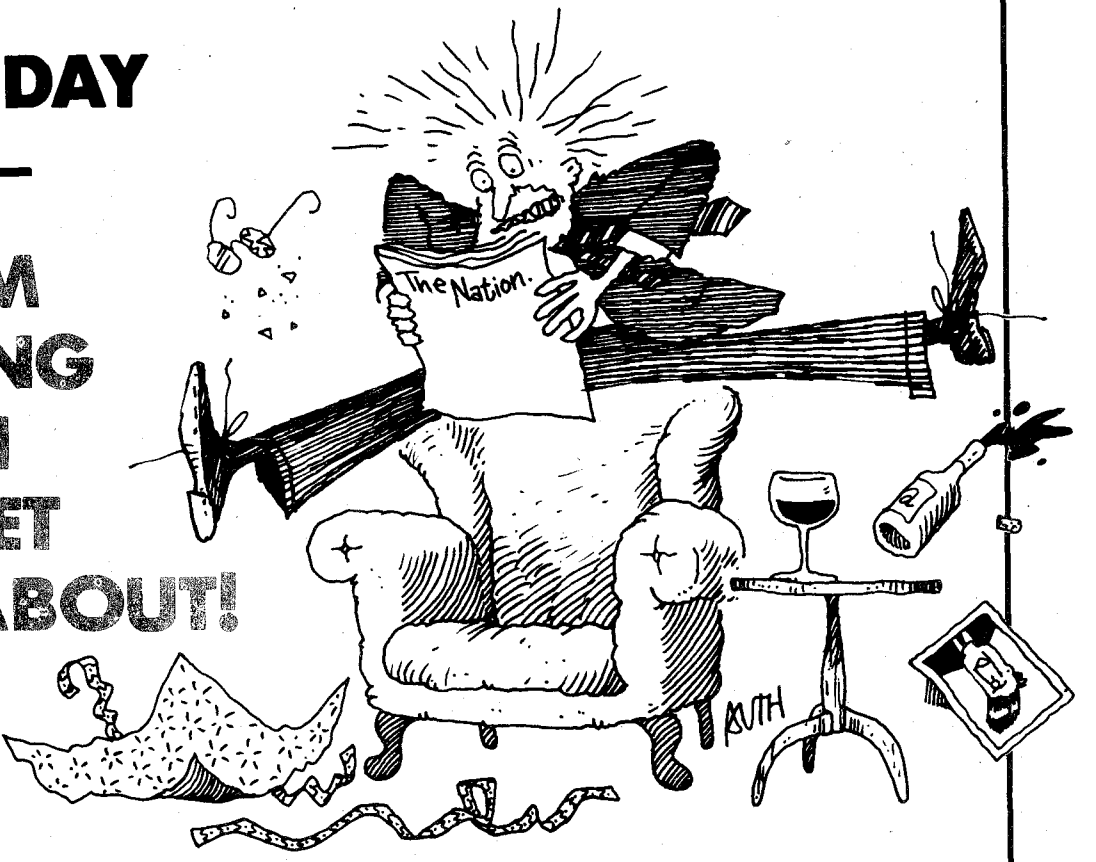

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significant coalition. Its advocacy of peace in Central America, a nuclear freeze followed by reduction and elimination of nuclear weapons, affirmative action for minority groups and women, cuts in defense spending, increased unemployment assistance and job training, and the rejection of apartheid in South Africa was somewhat advanced but, as opinion polls show, close to the sentiments of a majority of Americans. This program, therefore, contrasts sharply with current Democratic attempts to parrot the Republicans.

Amid recent signs that the independent coalition headed by Jackson is reorganizing, there are two reasons to believe that a rupture between this constituency and the party may eventually occur. First, by 1988 the coalition may mature to the point where it requires a separate institution for its political expression and the development of its political resources. Second, the leaders of the Democratic Party, in their rush to appeal to conservative Reagan voters, appear to be rejecting their tradition of coalition politics and intensifying a conflict with selected groups. The Republican Party, however, is not a viable option for most black voters as long as Reagan's policies continue to hurt the black community, and prominent civil rights leaders continue to call him a racist. This is so despite the well-publicized defection of a few black Democrats.

How far and how fast are blacks, the engine of the progressive movement, proceeding toward genuine independence from the party? At the local level, Democrats like Mayor Harold Washington in Chicago and numerous others in the South have had to run against state and national Democratic Party establishments. As the drive for political empowerment through the enforcement of the Voting Rights Act builds, an increasing number of blacks—especially in the South—recognize that state Democratic organizations are maintaining barriers to the exercise of the vote [see Richard A. Cloward and Frances Fox Piven's article on page 433]. Tensions will grow even sharper if the national party leadership continues to stand outside this battle, in defiance of the "one person, one vote" resolution passed at its 1984 convention.

A little-remembered event of the 1980 Presidential campaign was the formation of the National Black Independent Political Party, in which I played a modest role as chair of the charter commission. Polls consistently showed some support for a black party, so it was not surprising that in November 1980 more than 3,000 mostly young, progressive blacks, the largest number at a black political meeting that year, attended the party's founding convention in Philadelphia. What was surprising was that so many regular black Democrats were excited about the new party's prospects. (Their enthusiasm diminished when they learned the party was not an electoral vehicle.)

The proportion of blacks favoring an independent political strategy is not known. Last year the National Black Election Study, conducted by a team headed by James Jackson of the University of Michigan's Institute for Social Research, asked a sample of 1,150 blacks, "If Jesse Jackson ran as an independent Presidential candidate, would you vote for him, Walter Mondale or Ronald Reagan?" Fifty-seven percent of the respondents said they would vote for Jackson, but only 25 percent said they would support an independent black political party.

Unless the next election is another landslide, that "Jackson factor" could decide who will become President. The 3.5 million votes Jackson won in the 1984 primaries are probably the equivalent of 7 million in the general election, given the higher turnout in the latter, and 8.5 million votes separated Mondale and Reagan in 1984. The Democrats appear to be gambling that they can make a "bargain basement" trade of constituencies, gaining white males and Southerners while holding on to blacks and women, to assure a winning margin. If they continue to alienate black voters, however, they may find themselves on the losing end of the bargain. □

The Party

(*Continued From Front Cover*)

but it is useless to pretend that Congress can give leadership in the American system. The Presidency, for better or worse, does that.

§The other main ray of hope peeps out from the state governments. They are still substantially in the hands of the Democrats. For instance, about two-thirds of those Western states that haven't managed to vote for a Democrat as President all these years have Democratic governors. And sixty-six of the country's ninety-nine state legislative bodies (Nebraska is unicameral) are controlled by Democrats.

The bad-news list is longer:

§The Democrats can no longer be called the majority party. According to almost every poll, the best that the once-dominant party can claim is parity. And the class, age and demographic shifts between the parties are not encouraging.

§In the matter of money, the Democratic Party is not in the same ball park as the Republicans. The G.O.P. raises and spends six times as much for party electoral purposes. In actual spending by candidates for Congress, the Democrats are not that badly off (given that incumbency is still more interesting to "the interests" than ideology). But in the right-wing ideological and pressure-group world, the fruits of that ominously growing enterprise are plucked almost entirely by Republicans.

Project the dismal recent past into the frightening near future:

Item. Reagan in 1984 won as many states (forty-nine) as the total number of states won by the Democratic Presidential candidates in the five elections starting with 1968.

Item. The G.O.P. Presidential candidate has won four of the last five elections (three by a landslide, and six of the last

Blair Clark, former editor of The Nation, *managed Eugene McCarthy's campaign for the Democratic Presidential nomination in 1968.*

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ten, which takes us back to Harry Truman in 1948.

Item. No Democrat except Lyndon Johnson in 1964 has won a majority of the white middle-class vote since Truman's squeaker.

Item. In the South (leaving out Texas and West Virginia, won by Hubert Humphrey in 1968, thanks to George Wallace's siphoning off of the Nixon vote) the Democratic Presidential candidate won a grand total of two states in the elections of 1968, 1972, 1980 and 1984 (the Georgian Jimmy Carter took ten in 1976, enough to win the election).

Item. In the West (Plains, Mountain and Pacific states) the story is even grimmer. Humphrey won Washington in 1968, and that's been it in the five elections since 1964, the only Democratic landslide year since Franklin Roosevelt.

Item. Adding up those last five elections, the G.O.P. has won 77 percent of the electoral vote.

And if that tableau is not dark enough, the Republicans seriously mean to put an end to the Democratic strength still springing from the grass roots. They have mounted a multimillion-dollar effort, called the 1991 Plan, whose aim is to win control of a number of state legislatures so that after the 1990 census and the consequent Congressional reapportionment they can gerrymander to their hearts' content, with the aim of winning control of the House.

A big Republican success in the state legislatures by 1990 could do on a national scale what the Democratic effort led by the late Representative Philip Burton did in the redistricting, to Democratic advantage, of the state of California after the 1980 census—locking in control for a decade. In structural terms, the best hope for the Republicans to become the majority party their propagandists claim they already are lies in this sort of local activity. They do not lack the resources to pull it off.

Given this picture, what can be done to revive the Democratic Party? And what is being done by its so-called leaders?

On the money problem, that awful gap between the two parties' resources, things are looking a little better, if not dazzling. The Democrats have at last got themselves into the direct-mail solicitation business. But they discovered this bonanza long after the G.O.P. brought in its first money-gushers, and they lag in building and exploiting lists. Furthermore, not enough of the money flows into party coffers. It goes to individual efforts, which don't necessarily help the national Democratic cause.

Ironically, the Democrats were once quite even with the G.O.P. in fund-raising by mail. That was back in 1972 in the McGovern campaign, immediately scorned by the same party "professionals" who twelve years later leapt headlong on the Mondale bandwagon as it headed for the ditch. The McGovernites put together a contributors list of some 600,000 names, unique in the party's history. That would have been quite a legacy.

Like many another bequest, that one was thrown away. When Robert Strauss became heir to the Democratic apparatus, in the mid-1970s, as treasurer and then chair of the Democratic National Committee, he neglected the list he thought was contaminated with un-Democratic radicalism. That left as sources of party funds mainly corporate clients of Strauss and his friends, decked out in their brand-new political action committees. The party was then thoroughly in hock, not just to banks but to lobbyists, influence-peddlers and a new species of political fund-brokers. They raised enough money to build a new Washington headquarters. After paying for it, they had to borrow to meet the next month's payroll.

The dependence on the fat-cat world had its effect on policy. The message and the behavior of Democratic officials came increasingly to look like that of the Republicans. Sometimes the likeness was grotesque, as when, in March, the House Democratic Caucus put on a skull session at the swank Greenbrier Hotel in West Virginia which was attended mainly by lobbyists at $5,000 each; the press was excluded and the gathering was instructed on motivation by adpeople.

The Democrats' search for Mainstream was on in earnest. But they looked only to the right, hoping to find the source of Reagan's popularity. House Speaker Thomas P. O'Neill, typically, has attributed the weakness of the Democrats to the public's perception that they are too weak on defense and too strong on spending. The distinctions between the two major parties are swiftly vanishing.

There are two principal theories on how the Democratic Party can be revived. One is structural and programmatic and the other can be called Waiting for F.D.R.

The latter, the charisma fantasy, is based on dreams that someday out of the chaos will spring a savior, full-armed to smite the Republican foe. Never mind what he or she stands for; the vital thing is glamour—a new F.D.R. or a Democratic Reagan. These dreamers, sitting on their hands when not wringing them, take comfort from knowing that F.D.R. smashed Herbert Hoover in 1932 by hitting him as a big spender and that, long after the Keynesian pump was primed, Roosevelt was promising to balance the budget. All that matters is the candidate, not the platform, say the charismatists. Their only problem is finding such a person, especially in the thickets of the primaries, which did not exist in Roosevelt's day. If such a personality is not at hand, then try programs—"new" ones, of course.

Hence the gaggle of think tanks that have sprung up in the wake of the Mondale disaster. Some of them are openly attached to the Presidential ambitions of men like Edward Kennedy and Gary Hart (who is anti-PAC as a matter of policy, as he was in 1984; his thinkery is called the Center for a New Democracy). Kennedy is the proprietor of the giant among individual Democratic PACs, the Fund for a Democratic Majority, which has generated about $3.5 million and so far has given away practically nothing. It goes on building the donor list, perhaps with Kennedy himself in mind as that majority. Others, like the Democratic Leadership Council, made up of center-rightists such as former Governor Bruce Babbitt of Arizona, Representative Richard Gephardt and Senators Sam Nunn, Lloyd Bentsen and Lawton Chiles, have the more general aim of advancing the cause of conservative Democrats.

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Many of these committees stress the word "new" in their titles and propaganda, using it almost as tiresomely as Hart did in his 1984 campaign. They are apparently quite ready to dismiss the still-substantial appeal of the "old" in the Democratic tradition, now including the New Deal.

All that the party panjandrums know is that they have failed miserably to win the Presidency with either old or new formulas unless exceptional circumstances were present—Kennedy's Irish Catholic-plus-charismatic appeal, Johnson's the-torch-is-passed luck combined with the G.O.P.'s Goldwater fiasco, and Carter's distinction as the first Southern candidate since the Civil War (Woodrow Wilson of Virginia was thought of as a New Jersey Governor).

On the structural side of the equation of failure there remains for the party's chiefs the problem of "special interests": that is, all those caucuses set up with reformist zeal in the 1970s to broaden the base of the party, as the saying went. (The caucuses might never have come into existence if the convention of anguished 1968 had produced a more representative gathering than one with a mere 405 women and 211 blacks out of 3,049 delegates.) D.N.C. chair Paul Kirk has done everything he can think of to get rid of those groups which institutionally press their claims on the committee—the blacks, Hispanics, gays, etc.—and, of course, the biggest of them all, labor.

Labor, the cornerstone of the fondly remembered New Deal coalition, is now thought of by the D.N.C. as the party's biggest problem after money. It is not that the Democrats spurn labor money. They welcomed the approximately $50 million that flowed into Democratic campaign treasuries in 1984, mostly for Congressional contests. No, labor is problematic because the Democrats spell it s-p-e-c-i-a-l i-n-t-e-r-e-s-t. Isn't that what Gary Hart said about Mondale's labor endorsement long before Reagan chimed in? Not too long ago labor's interests seemed to be the general interest. If the current crew of Democratic managers ever knew that, they have chosen to forget it.

What they see instead is declining union membership (just over 20 percent of the work force, as against 35 percent in 1945) and a labor vote not substantially more Democratic than the rest. The A.F.L.-C.I.O. says that 60 percent of union members voted for Walter Mondale in 1984, compared with 41 percent of the total population, roughly a twenty-point advantage in union households. Other studies cut the labor margin about in half. Whatever the actual figure, it hardly signifies the vote of a movement. It is more like a slight shift within the middle class.

Paul Kirk has been begging Lane Kirkland not to endorse a Presidential candidate before the primaries next time. Kirkland says the A.F.L.-C.I.O. will do it again rather than running "the great risk of doing nothing and letting other people run your life." The Labor-Democrat relationship is like a bad marriage in which divorce is impossible because the partners are too dependent on each other to split.

The Democratic leaders have concluded that the electorate is overwhelmingly middle-class and that's the way it should be. In 1984 the D.N.C. announced a huge campaign of voter registration and then did nothing except lie about it. The handful of Democratic governors who made public facilities available for registration did so in the most gingerly way.

The astonishing fact is that voter turnout has fallen from about three-quarters of the eligible electorate a century ago to about one-half now. That's been done by making difficult the process of registration. It's a national scandal. We are left with two parties that have written off nearly half of the American people, dismissing them as just not part of the system, not worth trying to represent.

The Democratic chiefs are embarrassed that labor is in their corner and that 90 percent of the black vote goes to whichever candidate they put up, which costs them the South because of a backlash, as they see it.

The Democratic Party is a party without energy. It has no sense of direction. It depends on corporate America for much of its money, and so its policies are cousins of the Republicans' policies. It is getting weaker.

What about a third-party movement? Can that be the way out of the rut?

Third parties have always risen out of movements, citizens stirred to act against perceived wrongs no matter the odds. Where now do you find such political passions? They are remarkable for their absence, I think, especially during the most reactionary Presidency in our history. Only among black Americans can such strong feelings be found. A great many of them see no hope in the Democratic Party. Those who feel that way would seem to have a choice only between apathy and a third party which might rally to a standard raised by Jesse Jackson. Whatever such a party might accomplish at the grass-roots level (electing more black state and local officials), it would very likely doom the Democrats at the national level and usher in an unchecked reactionary Republican era.

Imagination may fail me, but I can't see a mostly black third party having any of the reformist influences on the major parties' policies that the Populists had in the 1890s, or that the Progressives had a generation later. So is there now a serious role for a more inclusive third party—one which would embrace black aspirations but go beyond them into areas of policy affecting all Americans who are eager to help create a just society?

In any case, the only hope for a Democratic revival, and therefore for a politics of relative decency, lies in a great expansion of the electorate. I agree with the analysis of Richard A. Cloward and Frances Fox Piven in their article on page 433, and their prescriptions to be published in a forthcoming issue. But it will take something like a movement, if not a crusade, to do that job. There will be no help from the professional politicians, and the Democratic Party apparatus will be in the vanguard of the enemy.

Can we overcome? □

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BOOKS & THE ARTS.

The Last Trumpet

EVAN EISENBERG

A musician is justified in fiddling while Rome burns if, at least part of the time, he fiddles an alarm. But alarming is not the only way music can respond to an emergency such as the nuclear arms race. This is an odd sort of emergency, one that has been emerging for forty years. The rope by which we dangle may break at any instant, but if it doesn't, untangling it will be a lifetime's work. Meanwhile there is no question of cutting the knot. In this posture the fiddler can do some useful things for the rest of us. He can alarm us, certainly, by alerting us to our position. He can help us imagine what is below, on the principle that vertigo is better than blindness. And he can help us find a way of understanding the world, a way of living in the world, that takes in at once the creak of the rope, the normalizing sunlight and the hope of someday being safe on solid earth.

The earth (the snap you just heard was the metaphor, so relax) should not be ignored in a discussion of nuclear war, being an interested party. After all, our way of rigging ourselves up above the earth, our fascination with man's fate as something apart from the earth's, has helped get us into this mess. As if that were not bad enough, the same fascination has impaired our thinking about music. Since Plato, we have thought of music as an imitation of human emotion. No doubt that is meant as a compliment to music, but if I were music I would be offended. Am I so small, I would ask, as to be limited to the interior of your heads? Am I not allowed fresh air? Although the music we admire as "pure" or "absolute" does not as a rule stoop to imitating the babble of streams, it does depict the activity of streams just as surely as it depicts the activity of human souls. Music is about the rhythms and energies, the beginnings and endings, that man and other things have in common. It is about their kinships and their blood feuds.

A man who has no music in him is fit for nuclear strategy, but for God's sake let no such man be trusted with it. For the rest of us, whether active in anti-nuclear politics or just trying to live decently in an awkward position, any kind of good music is helpful. And music that addresses our awkward position—addresses it not because the composer feels an obligation to do so but because he feels a need—can be a godsend, although it can also be pious drivel. Here are some recent examples.

Laurie Anderson has served on the board of Performing Artists for Nuclear Disarmament, and much of her music has a deliberate nuclear-age stiffness. In "Finnish Farmers," from her five-time-zone set *United States Live* (Warner Bros.), she plays a shrill electric-violin solo that rises and falls like a siren's wail and is, naturally, alarming. Before the solo she recites, in the horrid stylized inflection she shares with Lucinda Childs, a text about Finnish farmers firing into holes in the snow made by invading Russians whose parachutes have failed, and about Midwestern farmers informed that some of the grain silos in their neighborhood are going to house missiles, possibly linked by a subterranean railroad.

"This is the breadbasket," she says. "These are the crops." To me that suggests a subtext about the earth and about man on top of it, penetrating it, sometimes with plows and seeds, sometimes in more unnatural ways. And the violin solo, with its double-stop glissandi, suggests to me the roller-coaster ride of humans on an earth aroused by their prying, an earth bucking in revolt against the railroad in its bowels, an earth pregnant with monsters. Man becomes a "finish farmer," if you like, reaping the whirlwind. So the solo is not merely alarming; it is metaphysically informative as well.

Those of Anderson's listeners who were not reminded by her solo of Sugar Cane Harris may have been reminded of Penderecki's *Threnody in Memory of the Victims of Hiroshima*. In that work, completed in 1961, the Polish composer stretched catgut to new limits, approximating the limits of anguish to which human beings had been stretched. Composers following his lead sometimes lower their voices, not screaming but whispering of desolation. Such was the tendency of a piece by Ken Nikura performed by the Inoue Chamber Ensemble at Riverside Church in Manhattan to mark the fortieth anniversary of the atomic bombings. Masaoki Inoue, the ensemble's violinist, is a survivor of Nagasaki. *Words Hiroshima Make Us Say* [*sic*] has a text by Tamiki Hara which begins arrestingly with a bit of the Song of Songs. The image of the beloved as a gazelle upon the mountains of spices, an image sprung on the listener while he is envisioning an acrid plain, is the sort of contrast to which music can lend force, and Nikura's music—a careful progression of clusters, plucks, slides and muted scraping by the instrumentalists, and humming, keening and vocalise by the soprano, on this occasion Margaret Ahrens—did lend some force, but not the kind one might have hoped. The music should have clarified the idea that when we love, the earth is fragrant; when we hate, we make it stink. Instead it diffused it in anguish. This was music to help us imagine the abyss, but for that purpose one picture is probably worth a thousand bars.

The evening's program, which included an upbeat lecture by Richard Falk about living as "pilgrim citizens" in the nuclear age, was called Sounds of Horror: Words of Hope. Yet some of the music on the program was hopeful almost to the point of cuddliness. There was Schubert's "Shepherd on the Rock," an organ rendition of "Sheep May Safely Graze," a setting by Elizabeth Bell of Sylvia Plath's "Sheep in Fog." At the evening's end the audience joined in singing "Never Again the Atomic Bomb," a tune by Kohji Kinoshita which is sung each year at peace meetings in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The words are by Sekiji Asada:

> All that men have created with their hands
> And their minds for the glory of the world that we live in;
> Now it can be smashed in a moment,
> Deadly harvest of two atom bombs.
> People of the world, you must watch and take care
> That the third atom bomb never comes.

The long-limbed and graceful melody reminded me of certain Hebrew songs about the Messiah who *will* come.

But the most powerful thing in the

Evan Eisenberg writes about music for The Nation.

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concert was the moment of silence that followed the Nikura piece. In the darkness, two women struggled to light two candles on the altar. The dumb show was comical; it filled me with dread. For the rest of the evening in the vast drafty space the candles continued to gutter, more dead than alive, but alive.

In a Winter Garden, a recent composition by Libby Larsen, composer in residence with the Minnesota Orchestra, *is* hopeful to the point of cuddliness. It can be heard on Pro Arte in a fine-sounding performance by mezzo-soprano Janis Hardy, tenor Dan Dressen and the Plymouth Festival Chorus and Orchestra under Philip Brunelle. Described as "A Choral Work for Advent," *In a Winter Garden* has a libretto by Patricia Hampl, whose Prague-obsessed memoir, *A Romantic Education*, was fresh and sweet but whose work here is treacle. ("Treacle" comes from the Greek *theriake*, meaning an antidote to the bite of wild beasts; I have my doubts about this antidote.) Hampl and Larsen have found a way to write about nuclear war without producing so much as a shiver in the listener, something the Hudson Institute has been working on for years. Hampl explains:

> The season is Advent, and the community of sisters in a cloistered monastery is preparing for Christmas. One of the nuns (Sister) is unable to join in the joyous anticipation of the feast-day. She is worried and fretful, unable to pray. Her complaint, which she hints at, is a distinctly contemporary one: she is obsessed by the fear of annihilation, the end of the world. . . . In fact, the subject of Sister's terror is the traditional meditation theme of the ancient church for the season of Advent: "the last things" and the contemplation of the end of the world. Still, she is too distracted by the anxious fear that comes with life in the nuclear age to do her real work: to pray and meditate on these profound matters. The convent gardener (Thomas), on the other hand, is able to go about his business, taking care of the trees and plants in a contented, absorbed way ("All the prayer there is in hard work!" he says). The care of the earth, as Thomas demonstrates, is an antidote to Sister's incapacitating terror. His work is different from hers, but the spirit of his life is just what she needs.

Hampl's bright, clear poetry makes all this less silly than it might be, but the

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glib beauty of Larsen's music brings the silliness level back up very near the brim. Built on a pretty ascending-fourths figure which enters trailing a sleigh bell, the cantata is tonal although somewhat exotic in texture. Larsen is an adherent of the Poulenc order. Her string writing, alternately rapt and jaunty, seems influenced by Copland. *In a Winter Garden* has moments of great beauty, such as the dense, buzzing "Hot House," but in general the music's warm light drowns whatever shadows the words contain. The predicament of flowers in winter—"Their gorgeous, loud colors silenced, seized by terror, by the end of the world, the end of their pretty faces"—may, for a person of faith, be a good image of nuclear winter. The nun's key passage, "Nothing has changed; the world still trembles on its tender stem, and yet my heart is changing," could bear considerable weight. So could the gardener's dirt-in-the-fingernails philosophy, if interpreted broadly and dirtily enough. But Larsen's music makes the harmony of man and earth too easy, too tonic. There is little sense of how harsh that relation has been, no sense of how harsh it may get.

In its delicate way, *In a Winter Garden* touches what may be the nut of the problem for artists and thinkers now. Viewed *sub specie aeternitatis*, is nuclear winter just another winter? Or, if it is unprecedented, is it simply the end-of-days we have been expecting for two millennia? *Is* this just the same old sweet Advent song of the end of the world?

In "Late Night Thoughts on Listening to Mahler's Ninth Symphony," the biologist Lewis Thomas says that Mahler's music used to make him feel peaceful about the natural cycle of life and death but now fails to do so, because he fears the cycle will be interrupted or even ended, as far as man is concerned, by an unnatural gash. This is more or less what Jonathan Schell says: what used to give death meaning was the continuity of mankind, and now that is in question. Although the prospect of the death of death was known to John Donne and prefigured by Isaiah, it was more encouraging to them and remains more encouraging to Sister and her order than it can possibly be to the rest of us. The phrase "Death is swallowed up in victory," made famous by Handel, would now make a good motto for the Strategic Air Command (although possibly "swallowed up in prevailing" would be better). Clearly its meaning has changed.

So, perhaps, has the meaning of much Western music. A good deal of it, from the plainsong *Dies Irae* to *Messiah* and on to Mahler's "Resurrection" Symphony, is apocalyptic in content. Much more of it is "progressive," in the sense that it is hurrying to get to its final cadence and will not fully relax until it gets there. It even tends to make nature progressive (if one wants an example that is explicitly pastoral, Beethoven's symphony of that name will do). Since 1945, however, the dramatic beginnings and endings of Western music have come to seem oppressive.

It is natural that in looking for an antidote to history, many Western musicians have lately faced east. Minimalists (who object to being called minimalists, although the alternatives I can think of are even less flattering) are a case in point. The flat, timeless world of minimalism may be tiresome for some, but it is about as comfortable a world as you are going to find downwind of Alamogordo.

Philip Glass has said that he wrote *Satyagraha* because he wanted people to think about Gandhi for a few hours, and the opera house was as good a place as any; I suppose he wrote *Einstein on the Beach*, his 1975 collaboration with Robert Wilson (revived last year at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, and reissued on CBS Records), because he wanted people to think about nuclear war. But the opera house is not as good a place as any for thinking, as centuries of operatic tradition bear witness. Glass would have done better to provide the kind of concentrated music drama that sticks in the mind and germinates there. He could have done so if he chose. Like Monteverdi (whose "Amor" the beginning of *Satyagraha* recalls) or Otis Rush, he gives the impression of having just discovered the laws of tonality and their awful gravity. It is good for a change to be brought back to earth. As the film *Koyaanisqatsi* demonstrated, Glass's elemental chords have a kinship with mountains and canyons.

When in *Einstein* the orchestra and chorus suddenly vanish and a keyboard treble figure is exposed, I think of what will happen to man's games when the earth stops playing along. You can guess what I think of each time a section of music, instead of drawing to a close, snaps off. Throughout the opera, the solo violin figurations played by an "Einstein" seated at the margin of the stage ("on the beach," waiting for the final fog to roll in) are gravely moving. They remind me of a number of relevant things: Paganini's reputed pact with the Devil, Bach's contemplation of God, the hopeless jig of reason at the edge of infinity. (Newton on the beach collected pebbles, but Einstein knows they may be irradiated.) The "Night Train" scene, in which newlyweds sing rhapsodic, moonlit solfège at each other until the bride pulls a gun, cautions us against expecting to live happily ever after in a world armed to the teeth; this would be a cheap joke if the music were not beautiful.

It is sad that such powerful things are lost in tedium, like bits of conversation in an airport waiting room. The official line is that this tedium is but the threshold of Glass's house of wonder. In order to enter you must remove the shoes of your mind, leaving it with little traction. It may be that people whose souls are shaped by such music are unlikely to start a nuclear war, but surely they are unlikely to prevent one.

There is a temptation to blame all this on the North Indian and Himalayan cultures in which Glass has bathed himself. While Western religions can handle nuclear war only by fitting it into a tortuous eschatology, Eastern religions sometimes seem capable of taking it in stride. When Robert Oppenheimer saw the explosion at Alamogordo, a phrase from the Bhagavad-Gita glittered in his mind: "I am become Death, the shatterer of worlds." What is one world more or less in the career of infinity? But Hinduism and Buddhism, as I understand them, temper their equanimity with pity for the sufferings of sentient beings, and so have often been agents of peace. Glass does not even have pity on his own musicians. And although his music has moments of great power, on the whole it is cool as a wing commander's wristwatch.

In *The Desert Music*, a 1983 composition which can be heard on a new Nonesuch Records release, Steve Reich looks at nuclear war from the point of view of the artist who is trying to look at nuclear war; this being, paradoxically, the most direct approach a modern artist can take. Reich uses passages from the William Carlos Williams collections *The Desert Music* (1954) and *Journey*

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to Love (1955) that have more to do, on the face of them, with music than with bombs. Alamogordo may come to mind, but obviously what is important is the drifting of Alamogordo's dust over our mental landscape.

The Desert Music is constructed very sensibly, maybe a little too sensibly. The work has the form of an arch—ABCBA—which of all conventional classical forms probably fits minimalism best. It fits, too, the agenda of much antinuclear music, providing a reassuring magic circle, or half-circle, against history. The first movement (marked *fast*) sets a passage from Williams's dewy rendering of Theocritus: "Begin, my friend/ for you cannot,/ you may be sure,/ take your song,/ which drives all things out of mind,/ with you to the other world." The second (*moderate*) sets the question "Well, shall we/think or listen?"—an apt question for the minimalists' audience—from Williams's "The Orchestra." The third movement is itself a sandwich, beginning with a setting (*slow*) of another passage from "The Orchestra":

> Say to them:
> "Man has survived hitherto because he was too ignorant to know how to realize his wishes. Now that he can realize them, he must either change them or perish."

Here the chorus stops pulsing long enough to make itself intelligible. The harmony moves faster, changing sharply on the words "change them," and fading away on the words "or perish, or perish," like a spirit that visits to warn us and must depart. The movement continues with a setting (*moderate*) of the passage from "The Orchestra" that begins, "it is a principle of music/ to repeat the theme." The movement ends as it began, except that now glissandi by the violas (which are fitted with contact microphones) simulate an air-raid siren. The fourth movement repeats the text and music of the second. The fifth movement repeats the harmonies of the first but takes as its text two snatches of "Asphodel, That Greeny Flower": "Inseparable from the fire/ its light/ takes precedence over it" and "who most shall advance the light—/ call it what you may!"

Reich and Glass both write "pulse" music, but where Glass's pulse is made up of slowly shifting additive rhythms, Reich's hides a kaleidoscope of cross rhythms. Both get away with minimal

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harmonic and thematic development, but when it comes to quality their minima are different. If Glass can sound like trashy pop, Reich can sound like Muzak. *Music for 18 Musicians*, Reich's best-known work, can give the illusion that you are trapped in a porous elevator with other elevators whizzing by. *The Desert Music* begins with a reference to the work and never quite shakes it off. A sharp intelligence is in evidence throughout, but so is a bland sensibility; nothing quite rings true. A dull recording (at least on the preview cassette I heard) may be partly to blame, perhaps even a dull performance, although Steve Reich and Musicians are the performers, with chorus and members of the Brooklyn Philharmonic under an excellent conductor, Michael Tilson Thomas.

The young Nietzsche described music's Dionysian power to rip aside the veil of appearances and let us see the void at the heart of things. He was following Schopenhauer, for whom music was the image of the raw will in all things, the cosmic serpent that continually devours itself. Because the will is in all things, music comprehends all things; while other arts mirror the world, music mirrors what is inside it. Music, Schopenhauer said, could exist even if there were no world at all.

Because its vision of the void is beautiful, music can reconcile us to the end of the world. But that is a risk worth taking. For by the same token, music has the power to create the world, and our place in it, afresh. I take this to be a lesson of "The Orchestra," and especially of a passage that Reich does not use:

> The
> French horns
> interpose
> . . their voices:
> I love you. My heart
> is innocent. And this
> the first day of the world!

With our good will, Beethoven can still accomplish this. But we need our own voices. As music helped to demolish the empires of the nineteenth century by giving voice to the relation of a people and its land, so we need music that will demolish the subtler empires of this century, as well as the bristling forts that nation-states have become. We need Joshua's horn. Antinuclear music in the broadest sense—music that defines a healthier relation between man and man, man and earth, male man and female man—we cannot do without. Composers should not be afraid of repeating the theme. As Williams says, "The/ theme is difficult/ but no more difficult/ than the facts to be/ resolved." □

A Hole Is to Dig

JAMES MARCUS

THE NUCLEAR AGE. By Tim O'Brien. *Alfred A. Knopf. 312 pp. $16.95.*

Tim O'Brien's *Going After Cacciato* succeeded in making a nightmare at once nightmarish and quotidian. To achieve this quality of terror subjected to the rhythms of the mundane, O'Brien told two different stories. One detailed the life, times and steady decimation of the First Platoon of Alpha Company, 198th Infantry Brigade, stationed in Quang Ngai in late 1968. These chapters, with titles like "How They Were Organized," "Pickup Games" and "The Way It Mostly Was," sketch out a war largely devoid of battles, heroics, territory gained or yielded. The focus is instead on the redundancy of a life kept taut by fear: "There was certainty and regularity to the war, and this alone was something to hold on to." Next to this narrative O'Brien placed a second, the long and fabulous story of the deserter Private Cacciato, who is pursued by members of the platoon from the jungle all the way to Paris. This 8,000-mile chase is, we realize, a fantasy of platoon member Paul Berlin as he passes a long night watch in a Quang Ngai observation post. But, as Berlin tells himself, it's a fantasy of a special kind: "No, it wasn't dreaming. It was a way of asking questions." Page for page, the fantasy isn't always as strong as the straight narrative—it sometimes falls into a dilute whimsy—but it's the conjunction of the two elements that lifts *Cacciato* into a fictional world of its own, where unwinnable warfare and dreams of flight do illuminate each other. A way of asking questions, indeed.

O'Brien's new novel, *The Nuclear Age*, also punctuates the real world with fantasies, although the theater of operations has changed. Where the earlier novel took on the continual crisis of wartime, this one turns to the crisis of peacetime, no less of an occasion for battle fatigue. It's 1995, and the narrator, William Cowling, is digging a hole in his backyard. His spadework unearths a double cache. On the one hand, his personal history emerges—his neurotic childhood in Montana, his radical days in college and his two-year tenure as a messenger for a leftist revolutionary cadre. On the other hand, we're made aware that the hole contains public as well as private materials: history, the *Zeitgeist*, our era's distinctive mysteries of "the uncaused cause, the unnamed source, the unindicted coconspirator, the unknown soldier, the untold misery, the unmarked grave." In short, the stuff of the nuclear age, which, given William's birth in 1945, is also the stuff of his age. By digging into both at once, O'Brien raises a complicated and essential question: Where is the boundary between a personal, homemade neurosis and the epidemic madness of the age?

For madness is certainly the issue. The book begins with William's question "Am I crazy?" As he turns over his first spadeful of soil, he decides he's not:

> Signs of sanity: muscles and resolve, arms and legs and spine and willpower. I won't quit. I'm a man of my age, and it's an age of extraordinary jeopardy. So who's crazy? Me? Or is it you? You poor, pitiful sheep.

But as the framing narrative continues, and it becomes apparent that he intends to beat nuclear annihilation to the punch by burying his whole family in this hole, which he has adorned with Christmas lights, we decide that the question is far from closed. And we turn to his past for some kind of illumination.

We learn that at 13 he found himself in the grip of recurrent nightmares crowded with "sirens and melting ice caps and radioactive gleamings and ICBMs whining in the dark." He converted the Ping-Pong table in the basement into an impromptu fallout shelter, piling it high with blankets, charcoal briquettes and, in a final flash of inspiration, row upon row of yellow school pencils. (His disappointment when his father identifies the pencil cores as graphite, not lead, provides one

James Marcus is a novelist and critic living in New York City.

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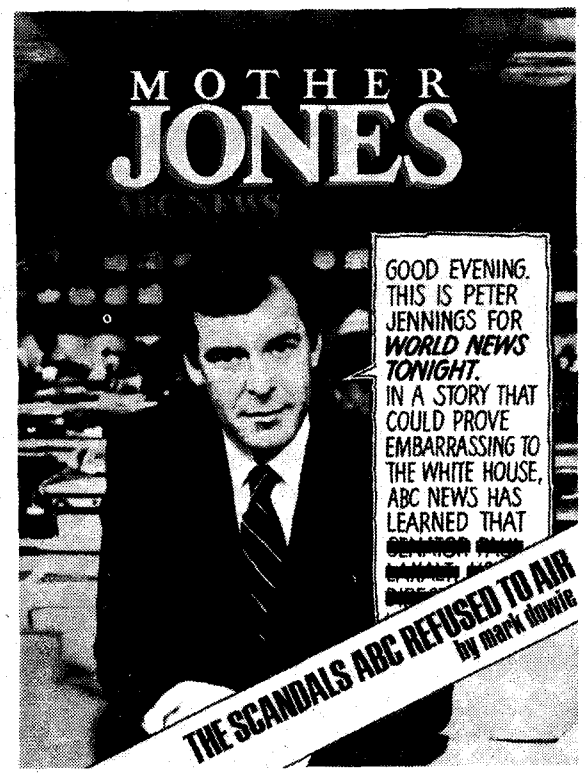
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by mark dowie

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of the novel's best scenes.) He even had a bout of psychosomatic headaches and constipation, which went into remission only after he confessed his terror to a sympathetic psychiatrist. Now, why should a "regular childhood in a regular town" be disfigured by all this? Is William crazy, or just realistic? He confronts this question at the beginning of his story, but he backs off:

> Maybe it was all the CONELRAD stuff on the radio, tests of the Emergency Broadcast System, pictures of H-bombs in *Life* magazine, strontium 90 in the milk. . . . Or maybe it was rooted deep inside me. In my own inherited fears, in the genes, in a coded conviction that the world wasn't safe for human life. Really, who knows?

Unfortunately, William continues to back off from interpretation throughout the remainder of the novel. We follow him to college, where the nightmares start again and he mounts a one-man protest in the school cafeteria, holding up a "The Bombs Are Real" placard. Now, it's this commitment to the *real* that should give William's crusade (and story) its sting. He studies geology, whose crystals and talcs seem like the closest thing to terra firma in the curriculum; he even fulminates against metaphor itself: "The world, I realize, is drugged on metaphor, the opiate of our age." Presumably, his nightmares are the price he pays for his realism. But his curious disengagement from the world undercuts his status as a prophet without honor. Where the fantasy sequences in *Cacciato* had the rugged solidity of the straight narrative to complement them, William's apocalyptic nightmares lack any such anchor: his version of sanity produces a strangely homogenized narrative in which "anything goes, everything, there are no more particulars."

"It's an era of disengagement," William says at one point, ascribing to historical necessity his own inability to grab hold of anything—love, politics, knowledge. Perhaps O'Brien believes that a personality this passive and disconnected reveals some truth about the nuclear age; in any case, the result is a sadly reduced brand of fiction, a life perceived through a layer of cheesecloth. It's dispiriting to see a writer of O'Brien's talents offer up this analysis of William's lover: "An intelligent girl, she played the coquette; a dignified girl, she played vulgar. And yet she was also oddly vulnerable, even little-girlish at

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times." Neither fiction nor prophecy can afford to be that perfunctory.

This weakness becomes especially conspicuous when O'Brien touches on terrain familiar from his other work. When, for example, William relates his decision to dodge the draft and go underground, the event slips by with a vague gesture at history: "But it was not my decision. The dynamic decided for me." Compare O'Brien's treatment of the same dilemma in the autobiographical *If I Die in a Combat Zone*. It's not a matter of morally ranking dodgers or draftees but of facing decisions with a straightforward honesty and eloquence notably absent from *The Nuclear Age*:

> It was an intellectual and physical stand-off, and I did not have the energy to see it to an end. I did not want to be a soldier, not even an observer to war. But neither did I want to upset a peculiar balance between the order I knew, the people I knew, and my own private world.

And yet that last sentence offers a clue as to why Tim O'Brien might write *The Nuclear Age*, and why this unsuccessful novel still seems like an honorable attempt. Both of the earlier books operated within that "peculiar balance"—fiction or nonfiction, they counted up the price for maintaining order, taking the oath, going to war. Here, William takes the opposite path, and for all his defects as a fictional mouthpiece, there's a certain courage in trying to follow him underground. □

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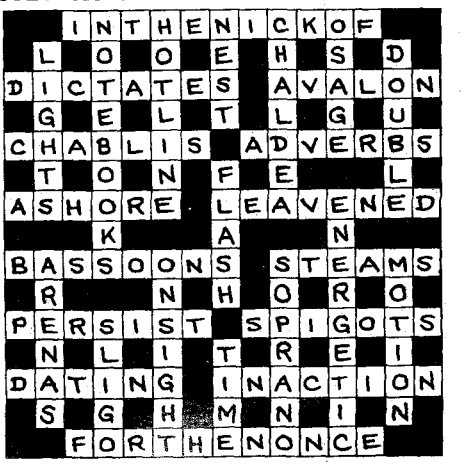

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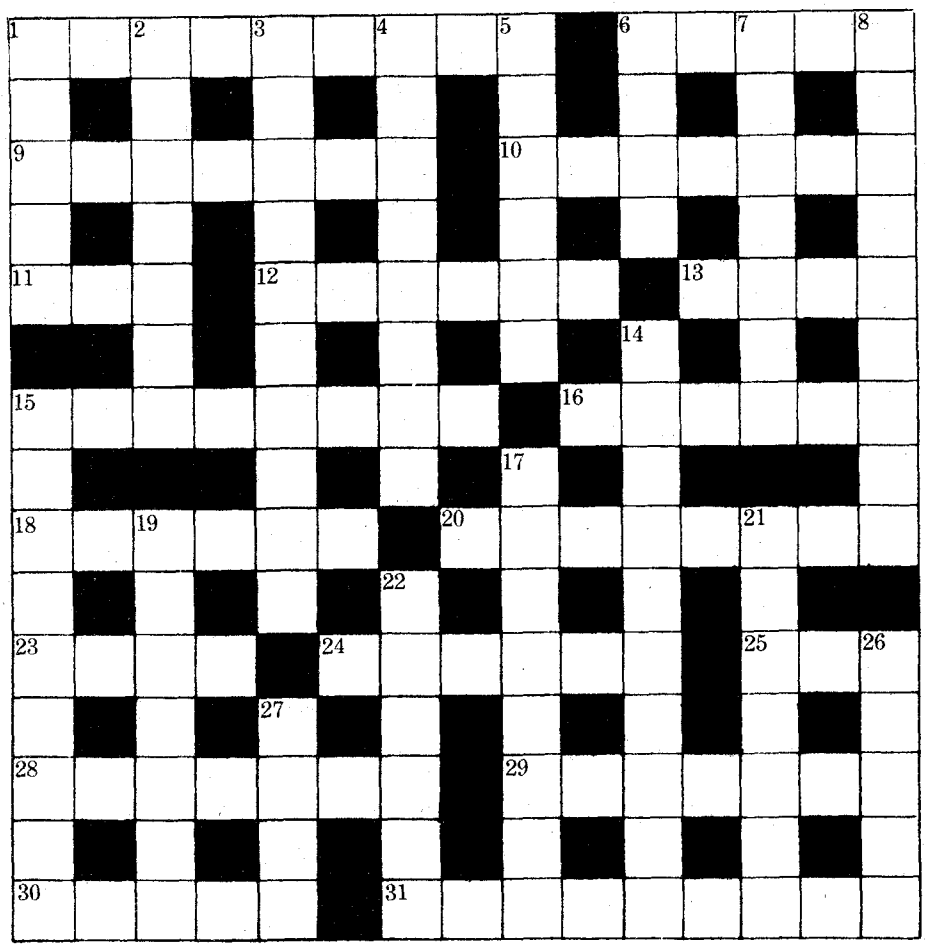

ACROSS

1 At the junction, hurried to what the little dog viewed with some amusement—which might have moved the soldiers, somehow. (9)
6, 11 and 25 Rifles coming back? A greedy one, and on time, as one might tell. (5,6)
9 Date and nut pudding—proving you can get accustomed to anything. (7)
10 Without the worker, 2 down is given a nasty start, seeing such creatures! (7)
11 See 6 across
12 Where Twain's 1 down went. (It's something other than a main highway!) (6)
13 The sort of lift one might get from drink, by the sound of it, at the counter. (1-3)
15 Everything in what the bee might do indicates trouble in flying. (8)
16 The French look on a tenant so. (6)
18 Might one pilot a jumbo? (6)
20 Not a place for laying bets, though waiters might be found in one. (8)
23 Worn by a dancer—or possibly a bishop. (4)
24 Doesn't make port? (6)
25 See 6 across
28 They might be dependent on the eaves at times. (7)
29 A water-carrier around the place of refreshment connected with the circus, reputedly. (7)
30 A thousand dollar bill? It goes on "grass"—which shows a certain bad habit. (5)
31 A sort of short congressman provided food and so forth and made without blemish. (9)

DOWN

1 One of three such before the boys are marching—though one might not work consistently. (5)
2 Caribbean state seemingly against the leaders of Guatemala. (7)
3 Virginia was guaranteed this by the press—supposedly making a yearly appearance. (5,5)
4 Putting things according to rank, as one might be in dining out. (8)
5 Possibly relating to certain Indians, making a test about a secondary indication. (6)
6 Carroll's was evidently beautiful in the evening, since it inevitably ends up here. (4)
7 A vehicle for all? (7)
8 Might make a bear's meal, but you could cut things out with it. (5,4)
14 Is what we fought for in this? (It could involve hanging!) (10)
15 An unspecified object that finds me so confused on a somewhat murky night. (9)
17 Edison, perhaps, has an opening in first or last. (8)
19 A high-level medium of communication, currently alive. (7)
21 High-wire or flying trapeze performance? (Not a good portrayal if one does.) (7)
22 Confuse supper with it, obviously. (Exhausts from it, too.) (4,2)
26 How some are barely discerned. (5)
27 Monitor an iron on this? (4)

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